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BURNS

AND

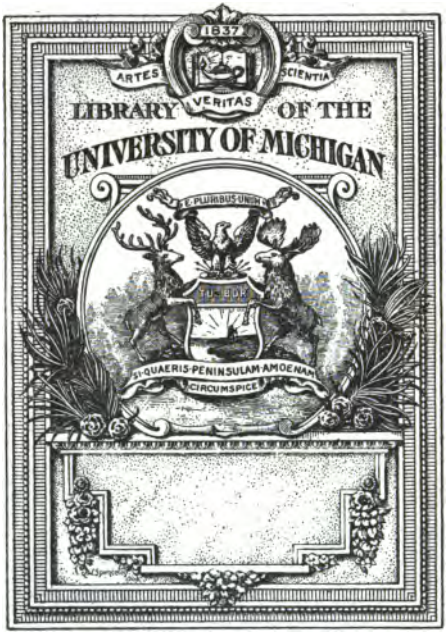
SOME OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES

BY THE GRANDSON OF

HIS FRIEND ROBERT AIKEN

WITH HIS BEST

POEMS AND SONGS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ROBERT BURNS

ROBERT BURNS

MEMORIALS

ROBERT BURNS

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MEMORIALS

OF

ROBERT BURNS

AND OF SOME OF

HIS CONTEMPORARIES AND THEIR DESCENDANTS,

BY THE

GRANDSON OF ROBERT AIKEN,

(P. F. Aiken)

TO WHOM WAS DEDICATED "THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT."

WITH A NUMEROUS SELECTION OF HIS BEST

POEMS AND SONGS,

AND

ENGRAVED PORTRAIT AND FAC-SIMILES.

LONDON:
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE & RIVINGTON.
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Preface.

DURING the last year several friends and admirers of Burns being interested by subjects referred to in the Address which forms the first Chapter of this Book, suggested its republication from the newspaper report. That request induced me to read the late lamented Robert Chambers' edition, of the "Life and Works of Burns" in four volumes, which is unrivalled for extensive research, chronological arrangement, and for the accuracy and the amount of its information. From its perusal, from various communications addressed to me since the centenary in 1859, and from my own observation during subsequent visits to Scotland, I learned more fully how great and how general is the interest felt by Scotchmen at home and abroad in the poetry of Burns, and in the personal history of himself and his contemporaries.

While in the opinion of the best English writers

he holds a very high rank among British poets, there are comparatively few persons in England by whom his works are read and duly appreciated. It is hoped that this edition will supply what is still wanted by many families and individuals, by public and by private schools, as it contains a numerous selection of the best Poems and Songs of Burns.

The accompanying memorials of the great national poet of Scotland and of some of his contemporaries are not intended to be a complete biography, which Dr. Currie and other able and eminent writers have provided; but to present a fair and characteristic portrait of that great original genius, sprung from the people and having nature's patent of true manliness and nobility.

Byron gave to Burns a place "in the first-class of his art," and the poet Rogers in his "Table Talk" is reported to have said that "The Cotter's Saturday Night was the finest pastoral in any language." Other writers according to their view have marked with equal precision his position among the great poets of our country. It may be more satisfactory and agreeable to the reader to form his own estimate of the comparative merits of Burns, aided by a few critical notices of some of those Poets with extracts from their writings, and

these I have endeavoured briefly to give, more especially in the third chapter.

Prefixed to the volume, is a good engraving of Nasmyth's original painting of Burns, kindly lent to me for the purpose by Mr. M'Kie of Kilmarnock. It also contains by the kind permission of Gilbert Burns, Esq., Knockmaroon Lodge, county of Dublin, nephew of the poet, facsimiles of the family register of William Burnes, the father of the poet, and of his own manuscript of the address by King Robert Bruce to his soldiers before the battle of Bannockburn.

During a residence of twenty years of early life in Ayrshire and in Edinburgh, I became well acquainted with places and persons that were the subject of his verse, and from personal recollection and other sources have contributed some biographical notices and anecdotes respecting them.

In the fourth chapter, the loss of many valuable letters from Burns to Robert Aiken is explained; and by the complete refutation of a grave error and mis-statement of Allan Cunningham, I have been enabled to perform a filial and a public duty.

In the life of the late Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod, just published, it is stated that when at Balmoral in 1866, he read to the Queen some of the

poems of Burns with which Her Majesty was much pleased. In a speech of Dr. Macleod quoted in the Life, he said that he would rejoice to see an edition of the Poems "from which everything "should be excluded which a christian father "would not read aloud in his family circle," an opinion with which his friend Dr. Duncan, Professor of Hebrew in the University of Edinburgh, cordially agreed. The present edition of the Poems and Songs of Burns is of that character.

P. F. AIKEN.

WALLCROFT HOUSE, DURDHAM DOWN,
BRISTOL, MAY, 1876.

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Memorials of Burns.

CHAPTER I.

Celebration of the One Hundredth Birthday of Robert Burns—Chairman's Address at the Festival at Bristol.

BURNS was born on the 25th of January, 1759, and on the approach of the one hundredth return of that day, the proposal to celebrate it by a suitable tribute to the genius of the great national poet of Scotland, was warmly received by the general voice of his countrymen. Of the comparatively few who objected to that demonstration, it was well said by Lord Ardmillan, the able and eloquent chairman of the Edinburgh meeting, that his power over the popular mind of Scotland could not "be ignored. Burns has lived, and has written, "and has a hold upon the heart of Scotland. It is well "to qualify our praises and to inculcate the warning "lessons of his life. But surely it is not the part of "wisdom or of virtue so to repudiate such a man, as to "consign to the cause and the friends of mischief a "name and fame so attractive and so potent." (Long continued applause.)

A chronicle of the Centenary was published, edited by Mr. James Ballantine, who stated in his preface, "The utmost enthusiasm pervaded all ranks and classes. "Villages and hamlets unnoticed in statistical reports, "unrecorded in Gazetteers, had their dinners, suppers "and balls. City vied with clachan, peer with peasant, "philanthropist with patriot, philosopher with states- "man, orator with poet, in honouring the memory of "the ploughman bard. The meetings were no less "remarkable for their numbers than for their unanimity "of sentiment; the number of speakers at each meet- "ing being greatly over the average on other public "occasions, and far beyond what the space of this "chronicle can record. Many noble poems and "eloquent orations have been omitted."

Yet it does record at considerable length in a large and closely printed volume the principal speeches at eight hundred and seventy-one meetings in Great Britain and Ireland, the Colonies, and the United States of America.

Burns having dedicated the "Cotter's Saturday Night" to one of his earliest and best friends, Robert Aiken, the committee of gentlemen who made the arrangements for celebrating the festival in the Hall of the Athenæum, at Bristol, invited his grandson to be chairman of the meeting. For twenty-nine years I had then been their fellow citizen interested in the commercial and civic affairs of Bristol, and its institutions, beneficent and literary; and although a native of Liverpool, was taken when seven years old to Ayrshire, now often called the land of Burns, to spend many years among the grand and beautiful Scottish scenery which inspired his muse; and also among survivors of his friends and acquaintance. Therefore I could not hesitate to accept the kind and friendly invitation, to which my heart responded, and to those circumstances the following address, now republished from the newspaper report, at the suggestion of some friends, owes whatever interest it may possess as an endeavour to express thoughts and feelings which filled our minds on

that memorable day, and which are perpetually revived by the works of the poet commemorated.

The one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns was celebrated in Bristol on the 25th of January, 1859, by two public dinners. In the large lecture hall of the Athenæum, about 126 gentlemen were present, under the presidency of P. F. Aiken, Esq. Immediately after dinner a number of ladies entered the tribune, and were received with loud applause. After the preliminary toasts had been proposed by the Chairman, and acknowledged by other speakers—

The Chairman rose and said—Ladies and Gentlemen —Poets have their day-dreams, but the brightest anticipations of Robert Burns could not have imagined the events of this day, of which the animating scene before me is only one example of what is passing in many places. He did not anticipate that not only his own countrymen, but that also Englishmen, and not only Englishmen, but such a bright assemblage of that part of the creation which is the fairest and the best, would meet to do him honour—(cheers). Gentlemen, we have had a banquet such as is not to be found on Parnassus, but we are now come to the feast of reason and the flow of soul, and as you have appointed me a task of some difficulty, and one which you desire I should perform to the best of my humble ability, I claim at your hands that kind indulgence and that time which are absolutely necessary to enable me to do common justice to the theme—(hear, hear, and cheers). All nations have celebrated the public services of eminent men by triumphs, festivals, statues, monuments. Our poets, whose characters are various and their works of unequal merit, have their monuments in our churches and cathedrals. At Westminster Abbey, they cluster like stars in the Milky Way, and their dust mingles with that of heroes, statesmen, and kings. It is a sad thought that posthumous honours come too often after

a life of comparative neglect and adversity. Milton complained that his lot fell on evil days; but little disappointed, not at all dejected, he looked forward with confident hope to the verdict of posterity. And so those best thoughts and words, that bear the stamp of immortality, come down to us in books, which Bacon finely calls "the ships of Time." As your cargoes, merchants of Bristol, increase in value when they come from afar, so the rich freights of genius that have safely crossed the waves of time are all the more precious. The greatest fame speaks no flattery to the "dull cold "ear of death," but animates the living to confer benefits on their country and mankind—(cheers). In speaking of the illustrious dead, we incline to panegyric. Yet mere panegyric is fulsome and untrue, for a faultless man never yet lived. But we do not strictly scan the private characters of public benefactors, in all of whom good and evil are variously blended. It is for public services that national honours are conferred, and our experience of human nature is best applied in self-scrutiny, and self-knowledge; for our fellow man, his temperament, frailties, trials, temptations, we can but imperfectly know, and only Omniscience can judge—(hear, hear). Burns as a man is not the subject before us, but Burns as a poet. His biography has been ably and impartially written, and his autobiography is given in his works with excessive openness and candour. More than sixty years have sufficed to form an estimate of what he was; but to review the story of his life is not our present purpose. Like other authors, he is subject to fair criticism, and as an honest and true man he scorned flattery and expected that praise and that blame which, with characteristic warmth, he bestowed on others. But our judgment of his writings will be incorrect unless we allow for his peculiar position and the seductions of his time. Till his 23rd year, by his brother's testimony, and to use his own words, "my "heart glowed with honest warm simplicity, un-"acquainted and uncorrupted with the ways of a "wicked world. The great misfortune of my life was

"to want an aim. I had felt some strivings of ambition, "but they were the blind gropings of Homer's Cyclop "around his cave." Yes, gentlemen, the cave of penury and toil. Seven pounds a-year to mow with the mowers, to reap with the reapers, to thrash with the flail, and to guide the plough, his soul conscious the while of a nobler destiny—the chained eagle striving to soar and gaze on the sun—the imprisoned lark carolling sweetly in its dull cage, yet longing to mount and fill the air with its rich melody—(cheers). Nature and the muse were his solace, and the deep-felt sympathies of friendship and of love. The prospect grew darker. The dearest ties were rent asunder. He expected an exile's lot,

"From thee, Eliza, I must go,
And from my native shore."

But at that crisis two warm friends encouraged the publication and sale of his poems, and he soon rose from the depths of woe to the pinnacle of fame—from frugal poverty to the luxurious entertainments of the rich and the gay in Edinburgh and elsewhere—with a keen relish for social converse and convivial enjoyment. And what did he find there? "Edinburgh," says Dr. Currie, "contained an immense proportion of men, of con- "siderable talents, devoted to social excesses, in which "their talents were wasted and debased." I have seen a desolate mansion in Ayrshire, where a large fortune was dissipated. The proprietor and his sons were contemporaries of Burns. They kept open house, made whiskey-punch in tubs, and their daily hospitality ended in nightly intoxication. Sir Walter Scott has described the progress of the wine-flagon round the table of the Baron of Bradwardine, and Burns, in his "Song of the Whistle," has celebrated a bacchanalian contest between three country gentlemen. The prize was an ebony whistle, and he who was able to blow it after his two competitors were too drunk to do so was the conqueror, just as a cock, whose two rivals are dead

beat and silenced, crows over them, lord of the dunghill —(laughter). Who does not regret that the muse should stoop to celebrate such orgies? The conversation and morals of the time were in keeping with them. And if in the metropolis and the provinces such vicious customs prevailed, what wonder that the peasantry should copy the example and often better the instruction—(hear, hear, hear)! Fashion may regulate dress and other social habits; but when she presumes to alter what is written on the eternal tablets of conscience and revelation, by substituting vice for virtue, fashion ought to be cast out as a profane intruder from the living temple which she dares to defile. Nor let it be forgotten that evil customs descend from the higher to the lower classes, like mists from the mountain, and may continue to spread darkness and pestilence, and misery, down in the valleys long after a brighter light and a purer atmosphere reign on the heights above. Burns mingled freely in all ranks of society, and described their manners. This may account for, though it cannot justify, much that he has written. But had he lived now he would have had no such orgies to celebrate—no such society in which to mingle. Happily, in the present day, to be a gentleman, yet a man addicted to intemperance, to loose, ribald, profane talk, are things irreconcilable—contradictions in terms. Burns, had he lived among the gentlemen of town and country now, would have found them not wasting their time and talents in debauchery, but improving agriculture, encouraging art and science, and literature, reforming abuses in mines and factories, as the noble Lord Shaftesbury and his associates have done, promoting temperance, cleanliness, health, comfort, diffusing Christianity at home and abroad, sheltering the homeless and relieving the miserable—(cheers). The warm sympathetic soul of Burns would not have been insensible to such influences, and a better employment would have been bestowed on him by his rich and generous and liberal friends, than to guage whiskey and to chronicle beer at every wayside inn for the pitiful

salary of £70 a year! Much of our classic literature bears foul traces of the age when it was produced, and by which it was deteriorated. Milton is as pure as he is beautiful and sublime. But it is not always so with his glorious compeer, Shakspere. The strains of the gentle Cowper flowed in unsullied purity, but it is far otherwise with Dryden—(hear). But whatever is contrary to good morals is offensive to good taste. The false, the polluting, the bad, will perish. The good, the beautiful, the true, shall live. Inglorious trifles, originating in transient and baneful fashions, will vanish along with them—(hear). Those universal truths that come home to men's hearts and bosoms, shall endure to the end of time—(cheers). James Montgomery, the Christian poet, who lived at Sheffield, was born at Irvine, in Ayrshire, where Burns once lived. Montgomery, while regretting his inability to attend the commemoration of Burns, on the banks of the Doon, in 1844, wrote, "I have often and unreservedly expressed both in prose "and rhyme, my admiration of the genius and best "writings of Robert Burns, though I could not in some "instances do otherwise than acknowledge that accord- "ing to my sincere judgment his talents had not been "always worthily employed. What is good in his poems "is excellently so, and that which is best in them puts "competition out of the field." "I have not," said Montgomery on another occasion, "been niggardly of "my praise, nor yet of my censure, for there are portions "of Burns's works over which we must lament that they "ever were written." During the last thoughtful and melancholy days of Burns, he told his most accomplished friend, Mrs. Riddel, that he feared that letters and verses written with improper freedom, and epigrams against those to whom he had borne no enmity, and many indifferent pieces with all their imperfections, which he would gladly destroy, would be thrust upon the world. It would have been well had greater regard been paid to his dying wish—(hear, hear). It is for us to fulfil it in what we read, and prize, and commemorate —to keep the gold, the ruby, and the diamond, leaving

the baser earth behind—to extract the pearl, and cast the coarse and worthless shell into the waters of oblivion—(applause). Burns and Sir Walter Scott have made Englishmen and foreigners acquainted with their country. Even in Dr. Johnson's time Scotland was imagined to be a hilly region without trees, bleak and barren, inhabited by a race half barbarous and half clad, fed on oats like English dogs and horses, the clansmen and followers of lawless chieftains. Edinburgh was named "Auld Reekie," smoky like London, to which Dr. Johnson would not object, but there were no police, and the houses were very high, and lazy cooks and housemaids in the eighth or tenth story, discharged the office of board of health by summary methods of domestic purification, perilous to passengers, which made the Doctor complain to Boswell of the Canongate and High Street after nightfall—(laughter). Now Englishmen are aware that romantic Edinburgh, the modern Athens, has few equals among cities; that commercial Glasgow is the Liverpool of the North; and that the waters of the estuary of the Clyde are at least as clear as those of the Severn—(hear, hear). Highland chieftains and their clans are respected among their native hills and for many a well-fought field, and their merits are acknowledged south of the Tweed, with the exception, perhaps, of one chieftain, under whose plain uninviting exterior there is warmth of heart—a solid substantial worth which recommends him to his countrymen—I mean that great chieftain of the pudding race—haggis—(cheers and laughter). What Burns and Scott together have done for Scotland, Burns did for Ayr—

> "Wham ne'er a town surpasses
> For honest men and bonnie lasses."

A town situated between the rivers Ayr and Doon, and on the shore of the broad blue sea of the Firth of Clyde. Those two beautiful rivers and the neighbouring scenery of Ayrshire, and Dumfriesshire, Burns has

made classic ground. And here you will pardon me for adverting to some facts incidentally relating to the family of him who has the honour to address you, as they are his apology for occupying this place, but especially as they are connected with the literary history of Burns, and therefore I am sure you will not regard them as egotistical. Indeed, I have no sympathy with that writer of a pamphlet who, when he sent to the printer for more proofs, received this reproof, "We "cannot set up more copy, for you have used up our "stock of capital I's"—(laughter). William Burns, the admirable father of the poet, was the gardener and bailiff of Mr. Fergusson, of Doonholm. A daughter of Mr. Fergusson married Mr. Hunter, of Bonnytown, also in Ayrshire, who became proprietor of Doonholm, of which the river Doon is the boundary for about a mile, flowing over its stony, rocky bed in streams and deep shady pools, where the trout and salmon love to play. The banks and braes, finely wooded, are of surpassing beauty. There is Alloway's "Auld Haunted Kirk," and the bridge over which the good mare fled pursued by witches, and Burns's cottage and his monument. The Rev. Dr. Hunter, Divinity Professor in Edinburgh University, a brother of Mr. Hunter, was proprietor of Barjarg, on the Nith, a few miles from Burns's farm of Ellisland, and their sister was the wife of Robert Aiken, to whom Burns dedicated the poem "The Cotter's Saturday Night," the original copy of which, in his handwriting, is here—(cheers). It is described by Professor Wilson as the noblest poem ever dedicated to domestic devotion, and by Mr. Lockhart, as that which of all his poems we could spare the least. Mr. Lockhart mentions that when Burns was about to embark for the West Indies in despair, his warm friends, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Aiken, encouraged the publication and sale of his poems, and Gilbert Burns wrote to Dr. Currie that "'The Cotter's Saturday Night' is "inscribed to Mr. Aiken, a man of worth and taste, of "warm affections, and connected with a most respectable "circle of friends and relations. The poems of my

"brother no sooner came into his hands, than they were "quickly known and well received in the extensive circle "of Mr. Aiken's friends, which gave them a sort of "currency necessary in this wise world even for the good "reception of things valuable in themselves." But Mr. Aiken not only admired the poet as soon as he became acquainted with him, but he showed the warmest regard for the man, and did everything in his power to forward his interest. The "Epistle to a Young Friend" was addressed to this gentleman's son, Mr. Andrew Hunter Aiken, of Liverpool. Having been taken, when a boy, from an English home to my grandfather's to attend a celebrated school at Ayr, I remember that holiday when I first saw a cottage, over which was a sign better understood than expressed. "Stop, passenger, and read! "This is the humble cottage which gave birth to the "celebrated poet, Robert Burns." With relations at Ayr and at Doonholm, with other friends also on the banks of the Ayr, were spent the happy days of boyhood; and at a later period, while visiting at Barjarg, near Ellisland, I became familiar also with the banks of the Nith, and saw and conversed with Mrs. Burns, the widow of the poet, in her own house at Dumfries, his last residence and place of burial. If your patience and the capital I's be not exhausted—(laughter)—I will now mention a piece of history not generally known. My aunt, Miss Aiken, when a child, used to delight Burns by singing charmingly his own songs. She met him at Dumfries a short time before his death. He said, "the fire in me is almost extinguished; I am the shadow "of my former self." She invited him to dine with her relation, and in their agreeable society he still displayed those wonderful powers of conversation which, by her report, by the testimony of Dugald Stewart, and other learned men, impressed them more with an opinion of his pre-eminent ability, than even his poems. The vigour of his understanding, the genial flow of his fancy, the brilliancy of his wit, made him the chief attraction, or "lion," as we say of Edinburgh, during a whole season. The fascinating Duchess of Gordon said his

conversation carried her off her feet, and his friend, Mrs. Riddel, described it with fervent eloquence. The Ayrshire ploughman and poet went out from his garret to be the welcome and admired guest of professors, authors, advocates, judges, peers and peeresses, and took his place among them with manly simplicity and conscious dignity, wearing the coronet of genius. When Dr. Currie was about to publish the life and poems of Burns, Miss Aiken went to Liverpool, and was in that society of which Currie and Roscoe were the ornaments. At Dr. Currie's request she wrote to Scotland for the poems which Burns had sent to her father, and the letters that accompanied them, to be published. Many of these letters were written, to use again the words of Burns, "when his heart glowed "with honest warm simplicity, unacquainted and un-"corrupted with the ways of a wicked world." In them he addressed his loved and honoured friend, led him to the Muses' fountain, and showed him the purest sources of his inspiration. What admirer of "The Cotter's Saturday Night," and "Tam O'Shanter," and "The Twa Brigs of Ayr," and "The Twa Dogs," and "The Mouse," and "The Mountain Daisy," and many more, would not wish to read the letters that accompanied them, containing the poet's own commentaries fresh from the heart. The poems were in a cabinet or secretary, in one parcel, the letters from Robert Burns to Robert Aiken in another. The poems were found and forwarded to Dr. Currie for publication. The letters had been removed by some one, who probably thought he had possessed himself of the whole literary treasure. Advertisements offering a reward for their restoration were unavailing, for to this hour they have never been recovered. If they still exist, I can only entreat in the name of Burns and of literature, that they may be sent to the grandson of him to whom they were addressed. I have just one short unpublished letter, which owes its preservation to its having been written on the flyleaf of a copy of "The Elegy of Sir James Hunter Blair"—

"To ROBERT AIKEN, Esq.,

"My honoured Friend,—The melancholy occasion of the foregoing poem affects not only individuals but a country. That I have lost a friend is but repeating after Caledonia. This copy, rather an incorrect one, I beg you will accept till I have an opportunity in person, which I expect to have on Thursday first, of assuring you how sincerely I ever am,

"Honoured and Dear Sir,

"Your oft obliged,

"ROBT. BURNS."

Of the many most interesting letters sent by Burns to Robert Aiken, only one appears in Dr. Currie's edition, whence another editor has drawn an erroneous inference. The absence of that correspondence I have now explained—(hear, hear). It is characteristic of great painters and poets that they are never at a loss for a subject, and whatever they touch they adorn. Nature is their teacher and their subject; and Nature is everywhere. The master's hand is seen in the truthful delineation of home scenes and wayside beauties. To depict Nature correctly is a high achievement, and still higher to paint her with imaginative truth, with feeling, and passion. In all this Burns excels. Trivial incidents suggest to him genuine poetry. Guiding the plough, he overturns a mouse's nest. His sympathetic soul pours forth its strain of pity at the ruin he has made, and then rises to a loftier sentiment—

"But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain!
The best laid schemes of mice and men
Gang aft a-gley,
And lea'e us nought but grief and pain,
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee;
But Och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear,
An' forward tho' I canna see,
I guess and fear."

And likewise in the "Winter Night"—

"Ilk happing bird, wee, helpless thing!
That in the merry months o' Spring,
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee?
Whare wilt thou cow'r thy chittering wing,
And close thy e'e?"

From the wintry woes of little birds he turns compassionately to those of men—

"Oh ye who, sunk on beds of down,
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
Think for a moment on his wretched fate,
Whom friends and fortune quite disown!
Ill satisfied, keen nature's clamorous call,
Stretch'd on his straw he lays himself to sleep,
While thro' the ragged roof and chinky wall,
Chill o'er his slumbers piles the drifty heap!"

In a similar strain are the beautiful lines to the "Mountain Daisy"—

"Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour:
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet!
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet
Wi' speckl'd breast,
When upward-springing, blithe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north,
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed
And low thou lies.

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date:
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom!"

But Burns can descend to things most insignificant, most unpoetical, and yet charm you. Shakspere says—

"The toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

And that we may find—

"Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

Burns went to hear a sermon, and saw a lady, who wore not "a precious jewel in her head," but a bonnet very large and very lofty, fashionable then, but not now—(laughter). By some untoward accident there had strayed upon that towering structure of millinery something that has not a local habitation nor a name in civilized society. Burns, with comic humour, traced its impudently ambitious career, and then finding good in everything, he exclaims—

"O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us!
It wad frae mony a blunder free us
And foolish notion.
What airs in dress and gait wad lea'e us
And ev'n Devotion!"

Shakspere has well described an ancient fop, and Burns has sketched a modern one—

"A little, upright, pert, tart, tripping wight,
And still his precious self his dear delight;
Who loves his own smart shadow in the streets
Better than e'er the fairest she he meets."

We may have seen such a specimen of frail humanity on a sunny day when butterflies are out, contemplating his fair proportions on the pavement like another Narcissus, and deeming it too much honour for the vulgar crowd of passers by to tread on his illustrious shadow—

"O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us!"

Burns describes the natural according to nature. When he attempts the supernatural it is at least in an original way. The witches in "Tam O'Shanter" are unlike the awful weird sisters of Macbeth. They are a jovial crew of dancers, who, notwithstanding their horrible accom-

paniments, inspire more of mirth than of dread. And so, in the "Dialogue of Death and Dr. Hornbook," and in the "Address to the Devil," solemnity of feeling yields to a jocund familiarity. In "Dr. Hornbook," Burns satirized a schoolmaster who presumed to administer medicines. Shakspere's Apothecary had "a "beggarly account of empty boxes," but not so the village doctor, whose catalogue of drugs is irresistibly comical—

"And then a doctor's saws and whittles,
Of a' dimensions, shapes, and mettles,
A' kinds o' boxes, mugs, and bottles,
He's sure to hae;
Their Latin names as fast he rattles
As A B C."

Calces o' fossils, earths, and trees;
True sal-marinum of the seas;
The Farina of beans and pease,
He has't in plenty;
Aqua-fontis, what you please,
He can content ye.

Forbye some new, uncommon weapons,
Urinus spiritus of capons;
Or mite-horn shavings, filings, scrapings
Distilled *per se;*
Sal-alkali of midge-tail clippings,
And mony mae."

—(much laughter). Burns did not attempt to follow Milton in the great sublime, but in his "Address to Satan," after expostulating with the author of evil for the mischief he had wrought, he takes the reader by surprise with a touch of compassion, not only for the victims but for the Tempter—

"I'm wae to think upon yon den,
Ev'n for your sake!"

The Vision in which, while he vowed to abandon poetry that found him poor and made him so, the Scottish Muse appeared to claim him as her own, and to bind him to her service, is poetry of the highest order—

"I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar;
Or when the north his fleecy store
Drove through the sky,
I saw grim Nature's visage hoar
Struck thy young eye.

Or when the deep-green mantled earth
Warm cherished every flow'ret's birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In ev'ry grove,
I saw thee eye the gen'ral mirth
With boundless love.

* * * * * * *

When youthful love, warm, blushing, strong,
Keen-shivering shot thy nerves along,
Those accents, grateful to thy tongue,
Th' adored name,
I taught thee how to pour a song,
To soothe thy flame.

* * * * * * *

To give my counsels all in one,
Thy tuneful flame still careful fan;
Preserve the dignity of man,
With soul erect;
And trust the universal plan
Will all protect.

And wear thou this—she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head;
The polished leaves and berries red,
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away."

The gravest moralist could not show more impressively the evanescence of pleasure than Burns does in his famous poem of "Tam O'Shanter," by a profusion of imagery—

"But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed!
Or like the snow-falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm."

In "Bruce's Address at Bannockburn" this highly figurative style is exchanged for the simplest, but full of fire and fervour—

"By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurper low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do or die!"

Never was sorrowing gratitude more feelingly expressed than in the "Lament for the Earl of Glencairn"—

"The bridegroom may forget the bride
Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee;
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a' that thou hast done for me!"

And how exquisite is his description of the pure and tender love of woman—

"As in the bosom o' the stream
The moonbeam dwells at dewy e'en,
So trembling, pure, was tender love
Within the breast o' bonnie Jean."

He had solemnly exchanged lovers' vows with his Highland Mary Campbell, who died early, before they met again. As he lay on some sheaves of corn at Ellisland, gazing on the planet Venus, he composed this exquisitely beautiful and pathetic ode to "Mary in Heaven"—

"Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget?
Can I forget the hallow'd grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love?
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace;
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr gurgling kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning green;
The fragrant birch, the hawthorn hoar,
Twin'd am'rous round the raptur'd scene.
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on ev'ry spray,—
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of winged day.

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but th' impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy blissful place of rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?"

Three characteristics of Burns's poetry are, strong sense, simple manly vigour, intense feeling. Like the ancient prophets and bards he was a seer. His sensitive mind received distinct images of what he saw, and he transmitted them in sun-pictures of nature in her beauty and grandeur, her brightness and gloom, in portraits of men and manners, coloured according to the moods of his mind, mirthful, melancholy, humourous, rejoicing, overflowing with tenderness and pity, vehement with passion or glowing with rapture—(applause). The soul of a sincere and great poet speaks to your soul in tones that thrill and vibrate through your whole being. This is true poetry, true eloquence. Possessing these qualities, his flowing verse, animating songs and lyrical compositions, are unsurpassed. His best works, composed in the intervals of labour, during a short life—for he died in his 38th year—indicate a power which, with more of learned leisure, might have achieved those higher results of continued industry, on which the fame of the greatest masters in the art depends. But he had great industry, great energy, and, notwithstanding his occupations, trials, difficulties, and temptations, the vision of his

youth was realized, for Scotland has bound the holly round his head and crowned him her national bard, and she says of Burns, as a favourite poet of England said of his country—

"With all thy faults, I love thee still."

In every library, in every house, aye, in every cottage whose inmates can read—and how few of the Scottish peasantry cannot read?—is the favourite volume; and in their bibles and standard books of divinity that well-instructed peasantry have the best corrective of what is evil both in life and in literature, the best preparation to appreciate what is pure and excellent in both—(hear, hear). Not only are the poems and songs of Burns read and sung by the fireside and in the field; the expatriated Scotchman takes them as the companions of his exile to Canadian wilds, or to a tropical climate. There the glowing lines of the rustic bard recall fair visions of the purple mountains, the woody vales, the banks and the braes where his boyhood wandered, till he seems to feel the breeze from his native hills fan and revive his languid frame,—to see the well-known river, to hear the dash of its waterfalls, and listen to the murmuring flow of its crystal streams at the magic touch of genius. And if among heathen temples, and shapeless idols, and polluted rites, the sacred day has been unhallowed, haply "The Cotter's Saturday Night" may remind him of the coming morn, and the simple worship of his father's home. This is what we commemorate when we approach the poet's tomb to hang our grateful garland there—(cheers). And if every epitaph were as candid as that which his own hand inscribed, how much posthumous flattery would disappear—

"Is there a man whose judgment clear
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs himself life's mad career
Wild as the wave?
Here pause, and through the starting tear,
Survey this grave."

Who can survey it without mingled admiration and sorrow? Who will survey it in any other spirit than that of the lowly publican?—(loud applause). Had I been born in a clay-built cottage, cradled in adversity, with a loving, ardent, lofty, impetuous soul, raised suddenly from the depths of despair to the perilous heights of fame, from frugal poverty to scenes which realized the voluptuous den of Comus and his crew, how should I have broken the spell and escaped the snare? Down, censorious pride; be humble, be contented, be grateful. It is thus we would pay the tribute due to genius, yet render that higher homage we owe to truth and virtue. (The Chairman resumed his seat amidst long continued and enthusiastic cheering).

CHAPTER II.

Burns compared with Gray and other poets.—Opinions as to his poetry of Lord Lytton, Wordsworth, Byron, Crabbe, Pitt.—His generosity.—Despondency.—Visit to Edinburgh, and Address to it.—Tours in Scotland.—Clarinda.—Marriage.—Poems to his bride.—Ellisland.—Social habits of the age.—Cunningham's description of Burns.—His method of Composition.—The poetical temperament.—Letter to Mrs. Dunlop.—Notices of him by Mr. Gray and Mr. Ramsay.—Religious sentiments. Concluding remarks.

BURNS overrated the poems of Ossian; he also considered Gray and Shenstone to be models whom he could not aspire to equal. The best judges now estimate very differently the comparative merits of those English poets and the Scottish bard. Lord Lytton wrote of Burns, that although "conscious "of the influences which formed him into a poet, he "was unable to tell how he trained his genius into art; "yet *an artist* he indisputably was, and it is astonishing "how marvellously correct, both in details and as "wholes, most of his writings are. He is one of the "most correct poets that the world has known. In his "smallest pieces the conception is thoroughly carried "out; in his easiest lines there is never a word too "much nor too little; his simplicity has in it the best "characteristics of Grecian art. He is a poet for critics, "and those songs which seem to gush so spontaneously "from the fervid heart of the writer, would furnish the "severest lecturer with his happiest illustrations of "classical concinnity and completeness.

"That Burns was a great genius every one knows, "but the world has been too apt to consider him, as "the world once held Shakspere, to be somewhat rude "and careless, and his energy is more conceded than "his skill. Yet, if a judicious reader were to take the "trouble of comparing some of the most familiar of his "stanzas with the most elaborate lines of the polished "Pope, or the fastidious Gray, it would be found that "the merit of superior correctness would, in nine "cases out of ten, be awarded to Burns. Gray is, "indeed, one of the most inaccurate, precisely because "one of the most artificial of poets. Of this the "melodious opening of his greatest and most careful "poem affords an example—

'The curfew *tolls* the knell of parting day,
The lowing herds wind slowly o'er the lea;
The ploughman *homeward plods his weary way*,
And leaves the world to *darkness and to me*.

'*Now fades the glimmering landscape*,' &c.

"That we may not appear hypercritical for the sake of "our own argument, we will borrow, with some abridg- "ment, the shrewd and sound observations that we find "in the appendix of the edition we now review. The "curfew tolls—1st. The word *toll* is not the appropriate "verb—the curfew-bell was not a slow bell tolling for "the dead; 2ndly.—Long before the curfew tolled the "ploughman *had* wended his way homeward; 3rdly.— "The day was not *parting*, when the curfew tolled it "had long since *parted;* 4thly.—If the world were left "to darkness in one line, how happens it, first, that in "the very next line, 'the *glimmering* landscape fades?' "and, secondly, that we are almost immediately after- "wards told that 'the moping owl is complaining to the "moon?' These are not mere verbal criticisms; they "are proofs that the writer is incorrect in his whole "picture, because he does not portray what he is seeing, "or has seen; he is heaping together incongruous

„images about evening, collected from books, and „compiled in a study. The incorrectness is equally „perceptible in the whole as in the details.

* * * * * * * *

"It was but rarely that Gray followed Sir Philip "Sidney's advice, to 'look in his heart and write.'

"But in Burns, inferior as was his education, im- "perfect his knowledge of the square and measure of "the architects of verse, the wording is accurate, the "picture complete, because, faithful to nature and to "truth, he is uttering simply what he has observed, or "expressing passionately what he has felt; and criticism "dies without a sign upon his descriptions of nature, or "his revelations of sentiment.

"In fact, as moral error consists partly in viewing "only a portion of the truth, partly in want of faith as "to the rest of the truth that it cannot discover, so in- "correctness, which is the moral error of the poet, "arises from a meagre experience, or from a lukewarm "imagination. Hence that poet is, in the proper and "scientific sense of the word, the most *correct*, who "combines the greatest acuteness of actual observation "with the most vivifying power of creative enthusiasm.

"Yet Gray was a great poet, though his faults lie "precisely in the quarter whence his merits have been "vulgarly drawn. He was not an accurate writer, and "in the larger and purer sense of the epithet, he was "not a classical one; he was not classical, for he had "neither the faith, the simplicity, nor the independent "originality which constitute the characteristics of the "poets of Greece. Learned he was, but the classical "poets were not learned. Pindar's rapture never lived "in the lyre of Gray, for Gray never knew what the "rapture of poesy is.

"Painfully and minutely laborious, diffident of his "own powers, weighing words in a balance, borrowing "a thought here, and a phrase there, Gray wrote "English as he wrote Latin. It was a dead language to

"him, in which he sought to acquire an elegant pro-
"ficiency by using only the epithets and the phrases
"rendered orthodox by the best models. But he was
"no vulgar plagiarist—his very deficiency of invention
"became productive of a beauty peculiarly his own,
"and created a kind of poetry of association; so that
"in reading Gray we are ever haunted with a delightful
"and vague reminiscence of the objects of a former
"admiration or love, as early things and thoughts that
"are recalled to us by some exquisite air of music, and
"in some place most congenial to dream-like recol-
"lections of grace and beauty."—*Lord Lytton's Miscellaneous Prosé Works.*

Gray, in short with much learning and cultivated taste, has reproduced from the calm contemplative study of the most approved models, works highly and beautifully artificial. But Burns excels him and many other poets, because while he diligently studied the best models within his reach, he had abundantly the creative power of a great poet, strong feelings and passions, exquisite sensibility, and a keen perception of the beautiful in nature and in sentiment, from which he drew the rich material of his art. He went to books for lessons in taste and culture, but he went direct to the natural and moral world around him for inspiration,

"I am nae Poet, in a sense,
But just a Rhymer like, by chance,
An' hae to learning nae pretence
Yet, what the matter?
Whene'er my Muse does on me glance,
I jingle at her.

Your critic-folk may cock their nose,
And say, 'How can you e'er propose,
You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,
To mak a sang?'
But, by your leave, my learned foes,
Ye're maybe wrang.

Gie me ae spark o' Nature's fire
That's a' the learning I desire;
Then tho' I drudge thro' dub an' mire
At pleugh or cart,
My Muse, though hamely in attire,
May touch the heart.

Whoever has watched a stream, as poet, sketcher or angler, or as a loving careful observer of river scenery, must be struck with the graphic power with which Burns describes such scenes, and with his skilful use of his native tongue as in Halloween, and as in the ode to "Mary in Heaven," in pure English, and how in that pathetic lay of love he does touch the heart.

"Ayr, gurgling kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods thick'ning green,
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar,
Twined am'rous round the raptured scene."

And in "Halloween," the brook seen by moonlight meandering through the glen, falling over or winding round a rock in eddies and pools, gliding and coyly hiding under braes like a living creature

"Whyles owre a linn the burnie plays,
As thro' the glen it whimpl't:
Whyles round a rocky scaur it strays;
Whyles in a wiel it dimpl't:
Whyles glitter'd to the nightly rays,
Wi' bickering, dancing dazzle:
Whyles cookit underneath the braes,
Below the spreading hazel,
Unseen that night."

Campbell is another of our standard writers, and Wilson said to Wordsworth he thought these lines in the "Pleasures of Hope" were magnificent—

" Lo to the wintry winds the Pilot yields,
His bark careering o'er unfathomed fields,
Now on Atlantic waves he rides afar,
Where Andes, giant of the western star,
With meteor standard to the winds unfurl'd
Looks from his throne of clouds o'er half the world."

And so you think this magnificent. What has a giant to do with a star, and tell me what is the meaning of a meteor standard to the winds unfurled. Take the book and read, for I cannot understand it. And Christopher North, poet and critic, soon threw down the book and said, neither can I understand it!

There is a great deal of magnificent nonsense, which read superficially may pass for poetry, especially under the shelter of a great name which Campbell had and deserved. There is a phrase, "neither rhyme nor reason;" rhyme without reason is just as common. It would seem that more may be said about this magnificent passage than occurred to the two poets during their table talk. Lord Byron wrote grandly

" Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains,
They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds
With a diadem of snow."

Suppose he had written Alps is the monarch of mountains—Pyrenees is the monarch of mountains.

The Andes or the Cordilleras is a chain of many mountains, extending 4,500 miles along the coast of the Pacific ocean, a multitudinous giant. Chimborazo is the giant of the Andes, but that did not suit the rhyme to which therefore reason and geography were sacrificed by poetical license.

The meteor-standard of Campbell was a Will o' the Wisp which misled that justly admired poet on more than one occasion. What a noble ode is Hohenlinden, heroic in the highest degree, and deeply pathetic; and

"Ye mariners of England" must often have kindled the courage of our brave sailors on the stormy deep,

> "With thunders from her native oak,
> She quells the floods below,"

is rather out of date in this iron age; no blame, however, to the poet, But what are we to say of

> "The meteor flag of England,
> Shall yet terrific burn!"

Sailing down the Rhine at midnight in 1844, we saw a meteor swiftly traverse our course, so brilliant as to light up every object on deck, and then quickly vanish. But for the Union Jack to burn and blaze away in that fashion; was ever such a thing imagined by our jack tars when they cheered those words, and thought them magnificent. I remember two wonderful lines in a poem on the battle of Waterloo, published soon after the event; the fame of its author was evanescent as a meteor, but never so brilliant—

> "And thou Dalhousie, thou great God of war,
> Lieutenant-Colonel to the Earl of Mar!

Mars, instead of being Lieutenant Colonel of Mar, ought at least to have been Field-Marshal and Generalissimo of the army; but we preferred the Duke of Wellington.

Burns never committed those meteoric and metaphoric blunders, for he looked "on fair nature's face" not through the spectacles of books, but with a true poet's eye. The philosophic poet Wordsworth, when he saw from Mossgiel the grand view of the Frith of Clyde, bounded by the peaks of Arran, thought it remarkable that with that daily prospect before his eyes, "during much the most productive period of his "poetical life, Burns nowhere adverts to it." Indeed he beheld the same scenery from infancy from the

shore between the Ayr and Doon rivers, and the surrounding country. Wordsworth offers this explanation of the fact: "It is as a human being eminently "sensitive and intelligent, and not as a poet clad in his "priestly robes, and carrying the ensigns of sacerdotal "office that he interests and affects us. Whether he "speaks of rivers, hills and woods, it is not so much on "account of the properties with which they are abso-"lutely endowed as relatively to local patriotic remem-"brances and associations, or as they are ministerial "to personal feelings, especially those of love, whether "happy or otherwise; yet it is not always so." Byron said that "undoubtedly he was in the first class "in his art," and the son and biographer of Crabbe, that his father was "ever as enthusiastic an admirer "of Burns as the warmest of his own countrymen," and Mr. Lockhart states that Mr. Pitt at Lord Liverpool's table, said that he could think of no verse since Shakspere's that had so much the appearance of coming sweetly from nature as his. Burns also resembled Shakespere in his various knowledge of mankind. Born and bred among the people, he learned to know human nature in that condition, familiar with their thoughts, feelings, habits and manners. But his eminent gifts, improved by observation and study, gave him access to other conditions of life; as the chosen companion of the most distinguished men of his country, and of ladies of rank and beauty, intelligent and accomplished, to whom his conversation was an attraction and a delight. Withal, he was a noble, generous, and independent man, scorning flattery and the fulsome dedications of former poets. "No mercenary bard his homage pays," was with him a fixed principle, carried perhaps to an extreme, considering his small and hardly earned income. For while he purified the old songs of Scotland from their dross and defilement, and gratuitously supplied Mr. George Thomson's collection of Scottish airs, accompanied by words—with about sixty of his own matchless songs, he often distributed among his friends in manuscript

those poems which have as much of immortality as belongs to earthly things; so that his friend Dr. Moore warned him against the practice, some of them having appeared in print before they were published by himself.

"Tam O' Shanter," his favourite work, to which other literary men and the public have given their approval for original humour and graphic power of the highest order, he presented to Captain Grose to be published in his "Antiquities," modestly asking a few copies of the proof sheets for himself and his friends, and that the poem should be accompanied with an engraving of "Alloway's auld haunted Kirk."

Mr. Lockhart wrote that the "Cotter's Saturday Night" could least of all be spared from the poems of Burns, and it may be said that the scenes it describes could least be spared from his life. A hard but noble struggle with adversity was the venerable father's lot, and his children shared it. Robert, when a boy of fifteen, worked like a man, and so injured his strong constitution as to cause palpitation of the heart, sleeplessness, and deep melancholy. The wages of the sons were only seven pounds a year, and as they never spent more, strict frugality and temperance and virtuous self denial were invariably practised by the poet till his twenty-third year. It was during their seven year's residence at Tarbolton, after leaving the cottage at Alloway, that Gilbert most admired his gifted brother. Unspotted by the world, he was more cheerful and animated, and his conversation, abounding in good sense and shrewd observation, enlivened by wit and humour, made him a charming companion and beguiled the toilsome hours.

In the summer of 1784, the state of his health was alarming to others and to himself. He had fainting fits at night, caused by irregular action of the heart, and his severe remedy was to rise from bed and plunge into a barrel of cold water. At that time he wrote the following:—

STANZAS IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.*

"Why am I loth to leave this earthly scene!
Have I so found it full of pleasing charms?
Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between;
Some gleams of sunshine 'mid renewing storms;
Is it departing pangs my soul alarms?
Or death's unlovely, dreary, dark abode?
For guilt, for guilt, my terrors are in arms;
I tremble to approach an angry God,
And justly smart beneath his sin-avenging rod.

Fain would I say, 'Forgive my foul offence!'
Fain promise never more to disobey;
But, should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair virtue's way;
Again in folly's path might go astray;
Again exalt the brute, and sink the man;
Then how should I for Heav'nly mercy pray,
Who act so counter Heav'nly mercy's plan?
Who sin so oft have mourn'd, yet to temptation ran?

O Thou, great Governor of all below!
If I may dare a lifted eye to Thee,
Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,
And still the tumult of the raging sea:
With that controlling pow'r assist ev'n me,
Those headlong furious passions to confine,
For all unfit I feel my powers to be,
To rule their torrent in th' allowed line;
O, aid me with thy help, Omnipotence Divine!"

At this anxious time he was kindly and hospitably entertained at the manse of the Rev. George Laurie, Minister of the Parish of Loudon, a few miles from Mossgiel. Mr. Laurie, a man of cultivated taste, the friend of the blind poet, Dr. Blacklock, and of Dr.

* August, 1784. Misgivings in the hour of Despondency and Prospect of Death.

Blair, having read the newly-published poems of Burns with admiration, sent the volume, with a recommendatory letter, to Dr. Blacklock, by whom they were shown to Dr. Blair. Burns having spent a happy day at the finely-situated manse at St. Margaret's Well, on the river Irvine, wrote and left these lines in his bedroom—

"O Thou dread Pow'r, who reign'st above!
I know Thou wilt me hear;
When for this scene of peace and love,
I make my pray'r sincere.

The hoary sire—the mortal stroke,
Long, long, be pleas'd to spare;
To bless his little filial flock,
And show what good men are.

She, who her lovely offspring eyes
With tender hopes and fears,
Oh, bless her with a mother's joys,
But spare a mother's tears!

Their hope, their stay, their darling youth,
In manhood's dawning blush;
Bless him, thou God of love and truth,
Up to a parent's wish.

The beauteous, seraph sister-band,
With earnest tears I pray,
Thou know'st the snares on ev'ry hand,
Guide Thou their steps alway.

When soon or late they reach that coast,
O'er life's rough ocean driv'n,
May they rejoice, no wand'rer lost,
A family in Heav'n!"

An encouraging letter from Dr. Blacklock advising the publication of another edition of his poems, led Burns to go to Edinburgh, and to abandon the project

of exile to the West Indies. To him, about three years afterwards, when married and settled at Ellisland, Burns wrote cheerfully and wisely—

"To make a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life."

In 1786, while at the farm of Mossgiel, he wrote the "Cotter's Saturday Night," and, in the inscription to "his loved, his honoured, much respected friend," are these lines—

"To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequestered scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah! though his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween."

Why so? His friend needed not to live in a cottage in order to be happy. Surely it was the under current of the Poet's own feelings, the vivid remembrance of his own early life, which suggested that sentiment; under that thatched paternal roof, hallowed by religion, have I not enjoyed the greatest purity, peace, and contentment?—"far happier there I ween."

While in Edinburgh, in 1787, he used to walk out early in the fine spring days, and often climbed to the top of Arthur's Seat, and roamed among the Braid Hills with Nasmyth, the artist, painter of his well-known portrait, watching the sunrise, and the lights and shadows of early morning on sea and land, the ancient city, the shores of the Firth of Forth, and the distant mountains of the Scottish Highlands. And sometimes his companion was Professor Dugald Stewart, whom he "charmed still more by his private conversation than he "had ever done in company. He was passionately "fond of the beauties of nature; and I recollect once

"he told me, when I was admiring a distant prospect in "one of our morning walks, that the sight of so many "*smoking cottages* gave a pleasure to his mind, which "none could understand who had not witnessed, like "himself, the happiness and the worth which they "contained."

Burns went to Edinburgh not to compose poetry, but to publish what he had already written, and had much to occupy his time and attention besides. But there he wrote the

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

"Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs!
From marking wildly-scatter'd flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

Here wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labour plies;
There Architecture's noble pride
Bids elegance and splendour rise;
Here Justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod;
There Learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks Science in her coy abode.

Thy sons, Edina, social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail;
Their views enlarg'd, their lib'ral mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale;
Attentive still to sorrow's wail,
Or modest merit's silent claim:
And never may their sources fail!
And never envy blot their name!

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptur'd thrill of joy!
Fair Burnet* strikes th' adoring eye,
Heav'n's beauties on my fancy shine;
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own his work indeed divine!

There watching high the least alarms,
Thy rough rude fortress gleams afar:
Like some bold vet'ran, gray in arms,
And mark'd with many a seamy scar:
The pond'rous wall and massy bar,
Grim-rising o'er the rugged rock,
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repell'd th' invader's shock.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately dome,
Where Scotia's kings of other years,
Fam'd heroes, had their royal home:
Alas, how chang'd the times to come!
Their royal name low in the dust!
Their hapless race wild-wand'ring roam!
Tho' rigid law cries out, 'twas just!

Wild beats my heart, to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Thro' hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore:
Ev'n I who sing in rustic lore,
Haply my sires have left their shed,
And fac'd grim danger's loudest roar,
Bold-following where your fathers led!

* Daughter of Lord Monboddo. Burns said there had not been anything like her, in beauty, grace, and goodness, since Eve on the first day of her existence. But, in 1791, he wrote her elegy, for she died early, of consumption, about six months before.

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All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
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Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs!
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And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade."

The successful publication of the second edition of his poems by Creech, the bookseller, in April, 1787, enabled him to gratify his wish to visit places memorable in the history of Scotland, or celebrated in Scottish song, or remarkable for beauty and grandeur. With Mr. Robert Ainslie for a companion, he travelled for three weeks in the South of Scotland, visiting Melrose, Dryburgh, Jedburgh, the rivers, hills, and dales between the metropolis and the border, and a part of Northumberland. He took an excursion with Mr. Adair, of Harrowgate, between the Forth and the Highlands, when he made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Bruce at Dunfermline, to Bannockburn and Stirling; and in August of the same year, with his clever, but in several respects undesirable, companion, Mr. Nicol, he took his most extensive journey, which he thus describes in a letter from Edinburgh, 16th September, 1787, to his brother Gilbert:—

"I arrived here safe yesterday evening, after a tour of "twenty-two days, and travelling near six hundred miles, "windings included. My farthest stretch was about "ten miles beyond Inverness. I went through the "heart of the Highlands, by Crieff, Taymouth, the "famous seat of Lord Breadalbane, down the Tay, "among cascades and druidical circles of stones to "Dunkeld, a seat of the Duke of Athole; thence across "Tay, and up one of his tributary streams to Blair of "Athole, another of the Duke's seats, where I had the "honour of spending nearly two days with his Grace "and family; thence many miles through a wild country,

"among cliffs grey with eternal snows, and gloomy "savage glens, till I crossed Spey and went down the "stream through Strathspey, so famous in Scottish "music, Badenoch, &c., till I reached Grant Castle, "where I spent half a day with Sir James Grant and "family; and then crossed the country for Fort George, "but called by the way at Cawdor, the ancient seat of "Macbeth; there I saw the identical bed in which, "tradition says, King Duncan was murdered: lastly, "from Fort George to Inverness.

"I returned by the coast, through Nairn, Forres, and "so on, to Aberdeen; thence to Stonehive, where James "Burns, from Montrose, met me by appointment. I "spent two days among our relations, and found our "aunts, Jean and Isabel, still alive, and hale old women. "John Caird, though born the same year with our "father, walks as vigorously as I can; they have had "several letters from his son in New York. William "Brand is likewise a stout old fellow: but further par- "ticulars I delay till I see you, which will be in two or "three weeks. The rest of my stages are not worth re- "hearsing: warm as I was from Ossian's country, where "I had seen his very grave, what cared I for fishing "towns or fertile carses? I slept at the famous Brodie "of Brodie's one night, and dined at Gordon Castle next "day with the Duke, Duchess, and family. I am think- "ing to cause my old mare to meet me, by means of "John Ronald, at Glasgow; but you shall hear farther "from me before I leave Edinburgh. My duty, and "many compliments from the north, to my mother, and "my brotherly compliments to the rest. I have been "trying for a berth for William, but am not likely to be "successful.—Farewell."

When Burns and his companion Nicol were at Banff, they visited the Master of the Grammar School there, Dr. Chapman. A boy of thirteen, his favourite pupil, many years afterwards related that when Nicol asked him which of the poems of Burns he preferred, he replied, "I like best by far the 'Cotter's Saturday

"Night,' although it made me greet (cry) when my "father had me to read it to my mother." Burns suddenly started and said, "Weel, my callant, I don't "wonder at your greeting at reading the poem, for "it made me greet more than once when I was writing "it at my father's fireside." Such exquisite sensibility was one great source of his power.

During his second visit to Edinburgh, in 1788, he was confined to his room for six weeks, the drunken driver of a hackney coach having overturned him; and he lay "with a bruised limb, extended on a cushion, and "the tints of my mind vying with the livid horrors pre- "ceding a midnight thunderstorm."

"I have taken tooth and nail to the Bible, and have "got through the five Books of Moses, and half way in "Joshua. It is really a glorious Book. I sent for my "bookbinder to-day, and ordered him to get an 8vo, "Bible in sheets, the best paper and print in town, "and bind it with all the elegance of his craft." In another letter, which opens gaily enough, he reverts to the same prevailing darkness of mood. "I ca'nt say I "am altogether at my ease when I see anywhere in "my path that meagre, squalid, famine-faced spectre, "Poverty, attended, as he always is, by iron-fisted Op- "pression, and leering Contempt. But I have sturdily "withstood his buffetings many a hard-laboured day, "and still my motto is, I dare. My worst enemy is "*moi meme*. There are just two creatures that I would "envy—a horse in his wild state traversing the forests "of Asia, or an oyster on some of the desert shores of "Europe. The one has not a wish without enjoyment; "the other has neither wish nor fear."

* * * * * * * * *

"These have been six horrible weeks. Anguish and "low spirits have made me very unfit to read, write, or "think. I have a hundred times wished that one could "resign life as an officer does a commission; for I "would not *take in* any poor ignorant wretch by *selling*

"*out.* Lately, I was a sixpenny private; and, a miser-
"able soldier enough. Now I march to the campaign
"a starving cadet, a little more conspicuously wretched.
"I am ashamed of all this; for though I do not want
"bravery for the warfare of life, I could wish, like
"some other soldiers, to have as much fortitude or
"cunning as to dissemble or conceal my cowardice.
"It seems impossible (says Mr. Lockhart) to doubt
"that Burns had, in fact, lingered in Edinburgh, in
"the hope that, to use a vague but sufficiently ex-
"pressive phrase, something would be done for him.
"He visited and re-visited a farm, talked and wrote
"scholarly and wisely about 'having a fortune at
"the plough-tail,' and so forth; but all this while
"nourished, and assuredly it would have been most
"strange if he had not, the fond dream, that the admi
"ration of his country would 'ere long present itself in
"some solid and tangible shape. His illness and confine-
"ment gave him leisure to concentrate his imagination
"on the darker side of his prospects; and the letters
"which we have quoted, may teach those who envy the
"powers and the fame of Genius, to pause for a
"moment over the annals of literature, and think what
"superior capabilities of misery have been in the great
"majority of cases, interwoven with the possession of
"those very talents, from which all but their possessors
"derive unmingled gratification."—*Lockhart, pp.* 181-2.

As it is with painters, Burns required a model, and said he preferred to have other ladies than his wife to sit for the poetical portrait. Nevertheless his Jean served the purpose as well as either Miss Alexander (the lass of Ballochmyle), or Mary Campbell, or Clarinda, or Chloris, or Jessy Lewars (the modest lassie, his wife's cousin), who kindly ministered to him during his last days at Dumfries. Some of his letters to Clarinda, chiefly written about this time, and obtained by an exchange of her's to Burns, give a curious view of his character. Her maiden name was Agnes Craig, grand-niece of Maclaurin, the mathematician, and cousin

German of Lord Craig. Her husband's name was McLehose—a man says Chambers—devoid of "just "moral feeling, from whom she was obliged to live "separate in almost indigence with her young children, "her husband being in the West Indies." She was about the age of Burns, had some poetical talent, and he praised and corrected some of her verses. They first met in the winter of 1787, while he was in Edinburgh preparing a second edition of his poems for the press. He was at that time under the erroneous impression that his irregular marriage had been dissolved. After their first meeting, the accident already mentioned confined him to his room, and their sentimental love was continued by correspondence, and then by interviews at Clarinda's House in presence of others or alone. She told him more truth about religion than he appears to have heard from any other acquaintance. She prescribed the boundary line of their intercourse, which was observed, and they played at lovers across the border—a dangerous game. Clarinda was fascinated, Sylvander charmed. The evenings spent in his most agreeable society were the happiest in her unhappy life, and such wonderful congeniality did she find in him, as she never found in any other man, not excepting her loving husband, who could not be said to have lost affections which he did not possess, and took no pains to secure. How far this delightful interchange of sentiment, this fervent platonism was prudent, proper, or justifiable is another question. Some writers have not spared that deserted, disconsolate woman, notwithstanding the difficulty of resigning the companionship which so gladdened her desolation. Burns' letters to her are generally considered to be strange and unsatisfactory, professing the ardent love of a devoted admirer. But at length having settled his account with Creech, the bookseller, and laurel-crowned, and with more money than he ever had before or after, he went off to Ayrshire to be heartily welcomed, and with the permission of Armour, and the cordial consent of his daughter, his marriage to her was confirmed and com-

pleted before a Justice of Peace in Mr. Hamilton's office, at Mauchline. Of the five or six hundred pounds received from the sale of his poems, he gave two hundred to his brother Gilbert for farming purposes at Mossgiel.

He announced his marriage to his friend Mrs. Dunlop in June, 1788. "Humanity, generosity, honest pride "of character, justice to my own happiness for after "life, so far as it could depend (which it surely will a "great deal) on eternal peace; all these joined their "warmest suffrages, their most powerful solicitations, "with a rooted attachment to urge the step I have taken. "Nor have I any reason on her part to repent it. I "can fancy how, but have never seen where I could "have made a better choice. Come then, let me act "up to my favourite motto, that glorious passage in "Young—

> "'On reason build resolve
> That column of true majesty in man.'"

When Clarinda heard that her poet's vows had been as easily broken as the green withs of Delilah were by Samson, and that awaking from his midsummer's night's dream he had recovered his own true love, she wrote to him an indignant letter. His character was but little known to her if she believed that he could keep himself disengaged for her for any long time; but the sudden change which had come over the spirit of his dream, and which put an end to hers, shocked and surprised her. They exchanged several letters of reproach and of apology in a very different tone from their former corespondence. About the end of the year 1791, her husband invited her to join him in the West Indies. Then Burns having occasion to pay his last visit to Edinburgh, they met as friends on the 6th of December. On the 27th he wrote in reply to a letter of hers, and enclosed a song composed for Thomson's collection, the fourth verse of which Lord Byron pre-

fixed to the bride of Abydos, and which has been most justly admired as expressing the quintessence of the tender passion—

AE FOND KISS.

Tune—" Rory Doll's Port."

" Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae farewell, and then, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.

Had we never loved sae kindly
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae farewell, alas! for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

On his birthday, the 25th of January, 1792, Clarinda wrote a friendly farewell to Burns before sailing to Jamaica in February, entreating him to "seek God's

favour, keep his commandments, and be solicitous to prepare for a happy eternity." Her meeting with her husband was disappointing, for such was his character and conduct, and so injurious to her was the climate of Jamaica, that she returned to Scotland in August. Having lived to a good old age, she survived Burns for many years, and ever cherished his memory.

Dismissing this episode of the Platonic loves of Clarinda and Sylvander, she had doubtless, been his charming companion, while there was a temporary void in his affections, which he was always prompt to fill (as his brother said) with one supreme love, and also subordinate plots. But having taken the farm of Ellisland, and married his Jean, the duties and realities of life claimed his attention. The old farm house was a miserable hovel, unfit for his young bride, whom unhappily he had to send to Mauchline from Whitsuntide till November, while he was left alone to attend to the repairs and the farm, himself being exposed to inconveniences and disadvantages by no means favourable to his welfare. But the Muse was his solace, and Jean his inspiration and sweetly melodious were the lays he sent to her.

I LOVE MY JEAN.

Tune—"Miss Admiral Gordon's Strathspey."

"Of a' the airts* the wind can blaw,
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best;
There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And monie a hill between;
By day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair;

* Points of the Compass.

I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
  I hear her charm the air;
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
  By fountain, shaw, or green;
There's not a bonnie bird that sings.
  But minds me o' my Jean.

O, WERE I ON PARNASSUS' HILL.

Tune—"My love is lost to me."

"O, WERE I on Parnassus' hill,
Or had of Helicon my fill,
That I might catch poetic skill,
  To sing how dear I love thee!
But Nith maun be my Muse's well,
My Muse maun be thy bonnie sel;
On Corsincon* I'll glow'r and spell,
  And write how dear I love thee.

Then oome, sweet Muse, inspire my lay!
For a' the lee-lang simmer's day,
I coud na sing, I coud na say,
  How much, how dear I love thee.
I see thee dancing o'er the green,
Thy waist sae jimp,† thy limbs sae clean,
Thy tempting looks, thy roguish een—
  By Heaven and earth I love thee!

By night, by day, a-field, at hame,
The thoughts o' thee my breast inflame;
And aye I muse and sing thy name,
  I only live to love thee.
Tho' I were doom'd to wander on,
Beyond the sea, beyond the sun,
Till my last weary sand was run;
  Till then—and then I'd love thee.

* Near Ellisland. † Slim.

On those ambrosial hill pastures of Parnassus, there was no fit fodder for Nithsdale kine, and both his warm heart and strong sense told him that his Jean was a far better wife for the farmer at Ellisland than any poetess would have been. The higher education of women up there might include Milton, Shakspere, Bacon, and ornithology, but the rearing of pigs and poultry, churning and cheese making it could not comprehend. His Jean was equal to all that, and as for the poetry, she could be his muse down in the vale, and by Nith's flowing stream, and with such inspiration Burns could make verses to flow like a river from day to day, and from age to age. His kind landlord, Mr. Miller, allowed him to choose his farm, but dreading failure, Burns obtained an appointment as exciseman, with a small salary to fall back upon in case of a reverse. The arrangement was not an advantage; it interfered with that strict attention to the farm which was necessary to make it prosper. It was fatiguing and harassing, and incongruous with agriculture and with poetry, to have to watch and pursue smugglers, and inspect their open or concealed stores of grocery, tobacco, and spirituous liquors, and still more to ride two hundred miles a week in that sad vocation, which in those days was not favourable to steady and temperate habits.

Lord Cockburn, who was born about 20 years after Burns, and long survived him, states in "Memorials of his Time" that nothing was more common than for gentlemen who had dined with ladies and meant to rejoin them to get drunk. "To get drunk in a tavern seemed "to be considered as a natural if not an intended "consequence of going to one. Swearing was thought "right, and the making of a gentleman. And tried by "this test, nobody who had not seen them could now be "made to believe how many gentlemen there were."

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"In the army it was universal by officers towards "soldiers, and far more frequent than is now credible, "by masters towards servants. The naval chaplain "justified his cursing the sailors because it made them

"listen to him; and Braxfield apologised to a lady "whom he had damned at whist for bad play, by declaring "that he had mistaken her for his wife."

Braxfield was the giant of the bench, who "shocked "the feelings even of an age which with more of the "formality had far less of the substance of decorum "than our own. Thousands of his sayings have been "preserved, and the staple of them is indecency. Almost "the only story of him I ever heard that had some fun in "it without immorality, was when a butler gave up his "place because his lordship's wife was always scolding "him, he exclaimed, 'Ye've little to complain o'; ye "may be thankful ye're no married to her.'"

Burns wrote from Mauchline just before he went to Ellisland, "I have fought my way severely through the "*savage hospitality* of this country, the object of all "hosts being to send every guest drunk to bed if they "can."

"Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and "men of strength to mingle strong drink"—"that con-"tinue until night till wine inflame them (Isaiah). In Scotland, where the religion of the Bible was honoured, its many precepts to this effect were then disregarded, and some men gloried in their transgression. Burns unhappily was led astray by the savage customs he complained of, and had more than once to apologize for what had been said and done under their evil influence. Nor did the penitential apology of the morrow completely repair the previous breach of good manners, and of friendship. He confessed that by such convivial habits he parted with "a slice of his constitution," they also consumed time, and were followed by self reproach and other evil results. Wives, mothers, and daughters had good reason to deplore the social excesses of those times, and in houses where they were frequent, they could rarely welcome the return of their male friends and relations to the drawing-room, so unfit did they become for the company of ladies of education and refinement.

Lord Cockburn mentions in his life of Jeffrey, that when

a boy, he assisted in carrying to bed Mr. Boswell, Dr. Johnson's biographer, intoxicated; and I heard it related of a country squire addicted to such excesses, that one night when returning home from a dinner party on a pony, a groom following, while crossing a ford he slid from his saddle into the water, and called out, "John I think there is something fallen." "Nae doubt there "is sir, and I am thinking it is just your ain sel."

There is another story of a gentleman more temperate than his convivial guests, who indulged his humour by preparing a room next to his dining room, to receive them when in the last stage of drunkenness. It was high, and the ceiling was made to look like the floor of a room, and the floor like the ceiling on which the sleeping drunkards were laid; and when they awoke, bewildered by the night's debauch their host in concealment, saw their tipsy wonder as to how they had gone aloft, and their ludicrous efforts to hold on by the supposed ceiling to avoid a fall. Mr. Chambers states on the authority of a relation of one of the gentlemen who contended for the Whistle, and who was not victorious, that he never quite recovered from the effects of that bacchanalian contest. The manners of those times are but too faithfully described in the pages of their best and most fashionable novelists. What manners!

Admirable as are the best poems and songs of Burns, "Tam O' Shanter" and the "Jolly Beggars" are considered to indicate a reserve of power which under more favourable circumstances, might have produced other and perhaps greater works. Yet when the story of his life is considered, after he resigned the lease of his farm in 1791, and removed to Dumfries as an exciseman with a salary of £70 a year, it is surprising that with such hindrances to the pursuit of literature, he should have accomplished what he did in a life prematurely cut off at the age of thirty-eight.

AND poetry was but one manifestation of his great genius. Mr. Ramsay, a country gentleman and a scholar, who had an estate on the Teith, wrote thus to Dr. Currie:—"I have been in the company of many "men of genius, some of them poets, but never witnessed "such flashes of intellectual brightness as from Burns, "the impulse of the moment, sparks of celestial fire! "I never was more delighted therefore than with his "company for two day's *tete-a-tete*." He proposed to Burns to write a play similar to the "Gentle Shepherd" and "Scottish Georgic." "But to have executed either "of these plans, steadiness and abstraction from com- "pany were wanting, not talents."

When Burns went to Ellisland, the steward of his landlord Mr. Miller, of Dalswinton, was Mr. Cunningham, a wise and able man, who admired the poet, and gave him sound and useful advice on farming and other matters. When he spoke with delight of the excellence of his farm and the beauty of its situation, the steward agreed with him as to the fine walks on the Nith, and views of the river, but added, you will also see several farms of fine rich holm or meadow land, any one of which you might have had. "You have made a poet's "choice rather than a farmer's!" And, in the opinion of Cunningham, and also of Corrie, who was tenant of the adjoining farm, Ellisland could only have been made to yield a moderate profit by more economical and skilful management than Burns, having other tastes and occupations, ever bestowed upon it.

Unfortunately, he was discouraged, and gave up the farm, and went to Dumfries as an Exciseman, just before the war had given such an impulse to agriculture that ordinary skill and diligence might have enabled him to obtain, as a farmer, the independence he so eagerly desired.

Allan Cunningham was very young when he first saw Burns, and heard him converse with his father on farming and poetry. He thus describes his personal appearance:—"Burns had just come to Nithsdale, and I think "he appeared a shade more swarthy than he does in

"Nasmyth's picture, and at least ten years older than he "really was at the time. His face was deeply marked "by thought, and the habitual expression intensely "melancholy. His frame was very muscular and well-"proportioned, though he had a short neck, and some-"thing of a ploughman's stoop: he was strong, and "proud of his strength. I saw him one evening match "himself with a number of masons, and out of five and "twenty practised hands, the most vigorous young men "in the parish, there was only one that could lift the "same weight as Burns. He had a very manly face, and "a very melancholy look; but on the coming of those "he esteemed, his looks brightened up, and his whole "face beamed with affection and genius. His voice "was very musical. I once heard him read 'Tam "O'Shanter,'—I think I hear him now. His fine manly "voice followed all the undulations of the sense, and "expressed, as well as his genius had done, the horrible "and the awful of that wonderful performance. As a "man feels, so will he write; and in proportion as he "sympathizes with his author, so will he read him with "grace and effect."

In one of his letters to Mr. Thomson, Burns describes his usual habit in song writing, his peculiar method of invoking the lyrical muse:—"Until I am complete "master of a tune in my own singing, such as it is, I "can never," says Burns, "compose for it. My way is "this. I consider the poetic sentiment corresponding "to my idea of the musical expression, then choose my "theme, compose one stanza. When that is composed, "which is generally the most difficult part of the "business, I walk out, sit down now and then, look out "for objects in nature round me that are in unison or "harmony with the cogitations of my fancy and work-"ings of my bosom, humming every now and then the "air, with the verses I have framed. When I feel my "muse beginning to jade, I retire to the solitary fireside "of my study, and there commit my effusions to paper, "swinging at intervals on the hind legs of my elbow "chair, by way of calling forth my own critical strictures

"as my pen goes. Seriously, this at home is almost "invariably my way."

Mr. Chambers gives the following letter, written from Dumfries in August 1793, as addressed to Miss Craik, of Arbigland:—"The fates and characters of the "rhyming tribe often employ my thoughts when I am "disposed to be melancholy. There is not, among all "the martyrologies that ever were penned, so rueful a "narrative as the lives of the poets. In the comparative "view of wretches, the criterion is not what they are "doomed to suffer, but how they are formed to bear. "Take a being of our kind, give him a stronger imagi-"nation, and a more delicate sensibility, which between "them will ever engender a more ungovernable set of "passions than are the usual lot of man; implant in him "an irresistible impulse to some idle vagary, such as "arranging wild flowers in fantastic nosegays, tracing "the grasshopper to his haunt by his chirping song, "watching the frisks of the little minnows in the sunny "pool, or hunting after the intrigues of butterflies—in "short, send him adrift after some pursuit which shall "eternally mislead him from the paths of lucre, and yet "curse him with a keener relish than any man living for "the pleasures that lucre can purchase; lastly, fill up "the measure of his woes by bestowing on him a "spurning sense of his own dignity, and you have "created a wight nearly as miserable as a poet."

In these few short sentences, writes Mr. Lockhart, as it appears to me, Burns has traced his own character far better than anyone has done it since. But with this lot what pleasures were not mingled? "To you, Madam," he proceeds, "I need not recount the fairy pleasures the "muse bestows to counterbalance this catalogue of "evils."

In an epistle in verse to Robert Graham, of Fintry, Esq., he indulges in a similar train of melancholy musing.

TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ. OF FINTRY.

Late crippl'd of an arm, and now a leg,
About to beg a pass for leave to beg;
Dull, listless, teas'd, dejected, and deprest,
(Nature is adverse to a cripple's rest):
Will generous Graham list to his Poet's wail?
(It soothes poor Misery, heark'ning to her tale),
And hear him curse the light he first survey'd,
And doubly curse the luckless rhyming trade!
Thou, Nature, partial Nature, I arraign;
Of thy caprice maternal I complain.
The lion and the bull thy care have found,
One shakes the forests, and one spurns the ground:
Thou giv'st the ass his hide, the snail his shell,
Th' envenom'd wasp, victorious, guards his cell.—
Thy minions, kings defend, control, devour,
In all th' omnipotence of rule and power.
Foxes and statesmen, subtile wiles ensure;
The cit and polecat stink, and are secure.
Toads with their poison, doctors with their drug,
The priest and hedgehog in their robes are snug.
Ev'n silly woman has her warlike arts,
Her tongue and eyes, her dreaded spear and darts.
But oh! thou bitter step-mother and hard,
To thy poor, fenceless, naked child—the Bard!
A thing unteachable in world's skill,
And half an idiot too, more helpless still.
No heels to bear him from the op'ning dun;
No claws to dig, his hated sight to shun;
No horns, but those by luckless Hymen worn,
And those, alas! not Amalthea's horn:
No nerves olfact'ry, Mammon's trusty cur.
Clad in rich Dulness' comfortable fur;
In naked feeling, and in aching pride,
He bears th' unbroken blast from ev'ry side:
Vampyre booksellers drain him to the heart,
And scorpion critics cureless venom dart.
Critics—appall'd I venture on the name,
Those cut-throat bandits in the paths of fame:

Bloody dissectors, worse than ten Munroes;—
He hacks to teach, they mangle to expose.
His heart by causeless, wanton malice wrung,
By blockheads' daring into madness stung;
His well-won bays, than life itself more dear,
By miscreants torn, who ne'er one sprig must wear:
Foil'd, bleeding, tortur'd in th' unequal strife,
The hapless Poet flounders on through life.
Till fled each hope that once his bosom fir'd,
And fled each Muse that glorious once inspir'd,
Low sunk in squalid, unprotected age,
Dead, even resentment for his injur'd page,
He heeds or feels no more the ruthless critic's rage!
So, by some hedge, the generous steed deceas'd,
For half-starv'd snarling curs a dainty feast;
By toil and famine worn to skin and bone,
Lies senseless of each tugging bitch's son.
O Dulness! portion of the truly blest!
Calm shelter'd haven of eternal rest!
Thy sons ne'er madden in the fierce extremes
Of Fortune's polar frost, or torrid beams.
If mantling high she fills the golden cup,
With sober selfish ease they sip it up;
Conscious the bounteous meed they well deserve,
They only wonder "some folks" do not starve.
The grave sage hern thus easy picks his frog,
And thinks the mallard a sad worthless dog.
When disappointment snaps the clue of hope,
And thro' disastrous night they darkling grope,
With deaf endurance sluggishly they bear,
And just conclude that "fools are Fortune's care."
So, heavy, passive to the tempest's shocks,
Strong on the sign-post stands the stupid ox.
Not so the idle Muses' mad-cap train,
Not such the workings of their moon-struck brain;
In equanimity they never dwell,
By turns in soaring heav'n, or vaulted hell.
I dread thee, Fate, relentless and severe,
With all a poet's, husband's, father's fear!
Already one stronghold of hope is lost,

Glencairn, the truly noble, lies in dust;
(Fled, like the sun eclips'd as noon appears,
And left us darkling in a world of tears:)
Oh! hear my ardent, grateful, selfish pray'r!
Fintry, my other stay, long bless and spare!
Thro' a long life his hopes and wishes crown,
And bright in cloudless skies his sun go down!
May bliss domestic smooth his private path;
Give energy to life; and sooth his latest breath,
With many a filial tear circling the bed of death!

While at Ellisland, among the other titles to the respect and gratitude of his neighbours, Burns, at the suggestion of Mr. Riddel, of Friar's Carse, superintended the formation of a subscription library in the parish. His letters to the booksellers on this subject, writes Mr. Lockhart, do him much honour. His choice of authors (which business was naturally left to his discretion) being in the highest degree judicious. Such institutions are now common—almost universal indeed—in the rural districts of Southern Scotland; but it should never be forgotten that Burns was among the first, if not the very first, to set the example. "He was "so good," says Mr. Riddel, "as to take the whole "management of this concern; he was treasurer, "librarian, and censor to our little society, who will "long have a grateful sense of his public spirit and "exertions for their improvement and information."

One of his best known and most admired letters to Mrs. Dunlop was written on the 1st of January, 1789:— "This, dear Madam is a morning of wishes, and would "to God that I came under the Apostle James's des- "cription, 'the prayer of a righteous man availeth much.' "In that case, Madam, you should welcome in a year "full of blessings; every thing that obstructs or disturbs "tranquillity and self-enjoyment should be removed, "and every pleasure that frail humanity can taste should "be yours. I own myself so little a Presbyterian, that "I approve of set times and seasons of more than ordi- "nary acts of devotion, for breaking in on that habitual

"routine of life and thought, which is so apt to reduce "our existence to a kind of instinct, or even sometimes, "and with some minds, to a state very little superior to "mere machinery. This day; the first Sunday of May; "a breezy, blue-skyed noon some time about the begin- "ning, and a hoary morning and calm sunny day about "the end, of Autumn; these, time out of mind, have "been with me a kind of holiday. I believe I owe this "to that glorious paper in the *Spectator*, 'The Vision of "Mirza;' a piece that struck my young fancy before I "was capable of fixing an idea to a word of three "syllables: 'On the fifth day of the moon, which, "according to the custom of my forefathers, I always "*keep holy*, after having washed myself, and offered up "my morning devotions, I ascended the high hill of "Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in medita- "tion and prayer.'

"We know nothing, or next to nothing, of the sub- "stance or structure of our souls, so cannot account for "those seeming caprices in them, that one should be 'particularly pleased with this thing, or struck with "that, which, on minds of a different cast, make no "extraordinary impression. I have some favourite "flowers in spring, among which are the mountain "daisy, the harebell, the foxglove, the wild-briar rose, "the budding birch, and the hoary hawthorn, that I "view and hang over with particular delight. I never "heard the loud, solitary whistle of the curlew, in a "summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a group "of grey plover in an autumnal morning, without feel- "ing an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion "or of poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can "this be owing? Are we a piece of machinery, which, "like the Æolian harp, passively takes the impression "of the passing accident? Or do these workings "argue something within us above the trodden clod? "I own myself partial to such proofs of those awful "and important realities—a God who made all things— "man's immaterial and immortal nature—and a world "of weal or woe beyond death and the grave."

These and other all-important truths he learned in his father's cottage from the "big Ha' Bible." Those early impressions survived; and if allured by sirens to turn aside from his course, he found it difficult to be regained by striving in gloom and tempest to guide his bark aright; with what intense interest do we watch the struggle, and listen at times to the human wail of that "sad wisdom folly leaves behind;" while heavenly harmonies resounding from his lyre inspire the longing wish and hope for final safety.

His friend, the Rev. James Gray, who knew him well, described him thus:—"While the keen eye of Burns "was pregnant with fancy and feeling, and his voice "attuned to the very passion which he wished to com- "municate, it would hardly have been possible to con- "ceive any being more interesting and delightful. I "may likewise add, that, to the very end of his life, "reading was his favourite amusement. I have never "known any man so intimately acquainted with the "elegant English authors. He seemed to have the "poets by heart. The prose authors he could quote "either in their own words, or clothe their ideas in "language more beautiful than their own. Nor was "there ever any decay in any of the powers of his mind. "To the last day of his life, his judgment, his memory, "his imagination, were fresh and vigorous, as when he "composed the 'Cotter's Saturday Night.' The truth "is, that Burns was seldom *intoxicated*. The drunkard "soon becomes besotted, and is shunned even by the "convivial. Had he been so, he could not long have "continued the idol of every party. It will be freely "confessed, that the hour of enjoyment was often pro- "longed beyond the limit marked by prudence; but "what man will venture to affirm, that in situations "where he was conscious of giving so much pleasure, "he could at all times have listened to her voice? The "men with whom he generally associated were not of "the lowest order. He numbered among his intimate "friends, many of the most respectable inhabitants of "Dumfries and the vicinity. Several of those were

"attached to him by ties that the hand of calumny, "busy as it was, could never snap asunder. They "admired the poet for his genius, and loved the man "for the candour, generosity, and kindness of his nature. "His early friends clung to him through good and bad "report, with a zeal and fidelity that prove their dis- "belief of the malicious stories circulated to his dis- "advantage. Among them were some of the most "distinguished characters in this country, and not a few "females, eminent for delicacy, taste, and genius."

When young and impetuous, he was encouraged to engage in theological disputation as a partisan and zealous controversialist. In such discussions Christian truths are often unduly exaggerated out of just proportion, and distorted so as to become error, and are set in opposition to other truths with which they should harmoniously unite, as component parts of the great scheme of salvation. The partial views thus early adopted he continued to hold with but little change; nor were they favourable to steadfast faith, strong abiding hope, comfort and peace in life's trials, troubles, and temptations. If the Christian religion, as set forth in the teaching, and exemplified in the lives of such eminent divines as Archbishop Leighton, of the Scottish Episcopalian Church, before his time, and afterwards by Dr. Chalmers, of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, had been cordially embraced by Burns, they would have yielded in him more abundantly "the peaceable fruits of righteousness." For it is not by bringing down scriptural truth from its high unerring standard to the lower level of our imperfect faith and obedience, that man can be justified, or his awakened and accusing conscience can be quieted and appeased. But to all of us, having sinned, being truly penitent, "remission of "sins that are past is declared through the forbearance "of God—that He may be just, and the justifier of him "that believeth in Jesus, who has died for our sins, and "risen again for our justification, that we may always 'serve Him in pureness of living and truth."

The religion of Christ and His holy life supply a per-

fect standard of duty and moral conduct for each of us to believe, obey, and imitate. But in estimating the characters of other men, how are we to apply that standard? By the rule of charity, "which suffereth "long, and is kind—is not easily provoked, thinketh no "evil;—beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth "all things, endureth all things."

How can we judge another, whose peculiar temperament, inclinations, habits, temptations, power of resistance, strivings against sin, advantages, disadvantages, motives, we may partly guess but cannot perfectly know and understand? "To his own master he standeth or "falleth." Therefore, "Judge not that ye be not "judged."

"Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us,
He knows each chord—its various tone,
Each spring—its various bias.
Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it,
What's *done* we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted."

That Burns, who keenly resented the presumptuous reproofs and censures of his fellow-mortals, was no self-deceiver, is plain from his writings, and especially from that most candid concentrated autobiography—

A BARD'S EPITAPH.

Is there a whim-inspired fool,
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
Owre blate* to seek, owre proud to snool,†
Let him draw near;
And owre this grassy heap sing dool,
And drap a tear.

* Bashful. † Truckle.

Is there a Bard of rustic song,
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,
That weekly this area throng,
O, pass not by!
But, with a frater-feeling strong,
Here, heave a sigh.

Is there a man whose judgment clear,
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs, himself, life's mad career
Wild as the wave;
Here pause—and, thro' the starting tear,
Survey this grave.

The poor Inhabitant below
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stain'd his name!

Reader, attend—whether thy soul
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthy hole,
In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious *self-control*
Is wisdom's root.

He also wrote, "My great constituent elements are "pride and passion. The first I have endeavoured to "humanize into integrity and honour; the last makes "me a devotee to the warmest degree of enthusiasm "in love, religion, or friendship—either of them or all "together, as I happen to be inspired."

"I have been this morning taking a peep through, as "Young finely says, 'the dark postern of time long "elapsed.' It was a rueful prospect! What a tissue of "thoughtlessness, weakness, and folly! My life re-

"minded me of a ruined temple. What strength, what "proportion in some parts, what unsightly gaps, what "prostrate ruins in others! I kneeled down before the "Father of Mercies and said, 'Father, I have sinned "against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more "worthy to be called Thy Son.' I rose, eased and "strengthened."

Other instances of deep self-humiliation and earnest prayer are recorded of this rarely-constituted, highly-gifted man; and that there were many more, known only to himself and to the "Father of Mercies," who can doubt? Hoping and believing this, let us go to the grave with his brother poet Wordsworth, and feel as he felt when sadly pensive, he uttered these wise and beautiful thoughts in noble verse:—

I mourned with thousands, but as one
More deeply grieved, for he was gone,
Whose light I hailed when first it shone
And showed my youth,
How verse may build a princely throne,
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues, and with it blends,
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
By Skiddaw* seen.
Neighbours we were, and loving friends
We might have been.

True friends, though diversely inclined,
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined
Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
More closely still.

* Criffel, a mountain in Annandale, near Ellisland, from which Burns could see Skiddaw, in Cumberland.

The tear will start, and let it flow,
Thou poor 'inhabitant below,'
At this dread moment—even so—
Might we together
Have sate and talked where gowans blow
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
Within my reach; of knowledge graced
By fancy, what a rich repast!
But why go on?
Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
His grave grass-grown.

* * * * * *

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight,
Think rather of those moments bright,
When to the consciousness of right
His course was true,
When wisdom prospered in his sight
And virtue grew.

* * * * * *

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
Are felt the flashings of his pen;
He rules mid winter snows, and when
Bees fill their hives;
Deep in the general heart of men
His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime,
Where heroes, sages, bards sublime,
And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
From genuine springs,
Shall dwell together till old Time
Folds up his wings.

Sweet Mercy, to the gates of heaven
This minstrel lead, his sins forgiven,
The rueful conflict, the heart riven
With vain endeavour,
And memory of earth's bitter leaven
Effaced for ever.

But why to Him confine the prayer,
When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
On the frail heart the purest share
With all that live?
The best of what we do and are,
Just God, forgive!

Descendants of Robert Burns.

For the following information respecting them, I am indebted to the kindness of Gilbert Burns, Esq., Knockmaroon Lodge, Co. Dublin, youngest son of the poet's brother Gilbert:—

The Poet's three sons were all married, James twice. Robert left an only child, Mrs. Everitt, now a widow, who, with her only child Martha, lives at Barn's Terrace, Ayr. William had no child. James left two daughters, Sarah, who married an Irish physician, Dr. Hutchison, now living at Bayswater, London, and her half-sister, Annie Burns. Mrs. Begg died some years ago; her two daughters, Agnes and Isabella, live near Ayr, her son, Robert, has been schoolmaster at Kinross for more than fifty years. The only living male descendant of the poet is Robert Burns Hutchinson, so that the name is extinct in the direct line. And in Scotland there is not an individual of the name of Burns or Burnes. The few that bear that name are not likely to return to Scotland.

In March, 1859, I received a letter from Colonel James Glencairn Burns, in which, after thanking me for an unpublished letter, in his father's handwriting, on

private family matters, which had been in my custody for thirty years, and which I sent to him, and after referring with approbation to the proceedings at the celebration of the centenary at Bristol, Colonel Burns wrote:—

"Since our return to this country, my brother (Colonel "William Nicol Burns) and I have annually visited "Scotland, and always made a point of seeing your late "worthy aunt in Ayr, and often have I heard her lament "the heartless robbery of my father's letters to her "father."

"I had the pleasnre of meeting your father, the "'Andrew dear' of one of the Poet's noblest and finest "inspirations, at a large dinner given to the Ettrick "Shepherd. After a separation of thirty-two years, my "brother and I have been spared to pass the evening of "our lives together, and have been domiciled here for "nearly fourteen years, our house being kept by my "daughter Annie. If business or pleasure shall ever "induce you and yours to visit this Queen of Watering-"places, you must bear in mind most strictly, that the "grandson of Robert Aiken must not pass the door of "the Poet's sons, where there will be always room and "a most hearty welcome for you. My brother joins in "kind regards to you, with

"Yours very sincerely,

"J. G. BURNS.

"4, Berkeley Street, Cheltenham."

In July, 1859, both the brothers and Miss Annie Burns came to Clifton, on their way to the South of Ireland, and spent a day with me. Colonel James died at Cheltenham, 18th November, 1865, and Colonel William at the same place, 21st February, 1872, and both were buried in the vault below the Mausoleum in Ayrshire.

CHAPTER III.

Comparative Sketch of the Poetry of Burns and Wordsworth, by Lord Neaves.—"Auld Lang Syne" exemplified.—Could Burns write good poetry in English?—Will the Scottish dialect, as used by him, injure his future celebrity?—These questions considered.—Notices of Chaucer, Spenser, Cowley, Dryden, with quotations.—Shakspere.—Milton.—Altered state of society, customs, and manners may modify the influence of poetry written under different social conditions.

FTER I had sent the second chapter to be printed, I received a letter from Lord Cowan, an eminent Scottish Judge, who retired, about a year ago, from the Court of Session, honoured and respected, who is my oldest, best, and most valued surviving friend in Scotland. "I send you a copy of an ad-"dress, delivered, a short time ago, by our "friend, Lord Neaves, in which he introduces a com-"parative sketch of the poetry of Burns and Words-"worth. Having told him that you intended to write "about Burns, and inquired whether he had not lately "done something in that way, he directed Messrs. "Blackwood to send two copies of his 'Lecture on "Cheap and Accessible Pleasures,' one for myself, and "another for you. I think his sentiments are just and "true, and the advice he gives to his audience really "good."

This welcome lecture came opportunely. Lord Neaves will observe that we agree in our appreciation of the merits of the two great poets whom he has so skilfully, and with such beauty of style and sentiment, compared, and his allusion to the letter from Mr. Gray will be prized by every admirer of Burns. "I regard," says Lord Neaves, "the testimony of Mr. James Gray, "an old friend of my own, and a most pure-minded and "trust-worthy man, as quite conclusive." "I owe it as "a debt of gratitude to Mr. Gray, who was my High "Schoolmaster, that he taught me to love and reverence "both Burns and Wordsworth at a time when the "*Edinburgh Review* tried to lower the character of the "one and the poetry of the other."

The following sentiments will receive a warm response from many hearts:—"No piece of poetry is so popular, "or has exerted so magical a power as the song of "'Auld lang syne.' At home and abroad it has melted "and delighted the hearts of Scotchmen in all ranks "and places—and no wonder. It contains, indeed, no "fine writing, no elaborate thinking; but its very sim- "plicity and its shortness are part of its power, and its "natural tone has the effect of high art. The sentiment "that pervades it is universal, and as strong as it is "general—the happiness of early friends meeting after "a long and eventful separation."

We twa ha'e run about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans* fine;
But we've wandered mony a weary foot
Sin auld lang syne.

We twa ha'e paidelt† in the burn,
Frae morning sun till dine;
But seas between us braid ha'e roar'd,
Sin auld lang syne.

* Daisies. † Dabbled.

Here is an appropriate illustration. In the year 1822, there passed Advocates, or as would be said in England, were called to the Bar, nineteen young men. In the month of July, 1873, only five of them survived, of whom one had long ceased to attend the Court of Session. Two were the eminent Judges already named; the third was the learned antiquarian lawyer, a Principal Clerk of Session, also Professor of History in Edinburgh University, Cosmo Innes; the fourth was a veteran renegade, the writer of this narrative.

Lord Cowan kindly arranged that we four should meet at the Judge's private room, and he sent his carriage to take my youngest daughter and myself to Holyrood, thence to the Queen's Drive, around Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags—a favourite resort of Burns during his Edinburgh visit, and since made classic by Scott's "Waverley" and "Heart of Mid-Lothian," scenery long ago very familiar to me. Within so short a circuit there are no views in the United Kingdom more pleasing and picturesque than those seen from the Queen's Drive:—Edinburgh, Scott's own romantic town, the Firth of Forth, its islands, the Bass Rock, the coast of Fife, and, in the far north-west, the blue Grampians, of which Ben Ledi and Ben Lomond are conspicuous, suggesting visions of sequestered vallies and their streams and lakes, and tales of ancient chivalry and feudal warfare. When our party, including two members of Lord Cowan's family, arrived at the Parliament House, there happened to be a meeting of the Faculty of Advocates, and as we were about to enter one of the rooms of their very valuable and extensive library, we were suddenly stopped by the porter. Mr. Cowan said, "This gentleman is an "Advocate." The man stared, astonished. "I beg "your pardon, Sir, for really I did na ken ye were ane "o' the Faculty." "Nae wonder, my man, for I havena "been here in Session time for near fifty years." "And "I was just a wee bit callant then; but noo that I "do ken ye are an Advocate, I hope ye will gang into "the meeting, and astonish them." "Their astonish-

"ment would not be so great as yours; besides, I have "an appointment immediately to meet two of the "Judges." "But, just to think o' my ill manners to "you, Sir." And so I had the happiness to meet the two Judges, and also Mr. Innes, whom we visited the next day at Inverleith House, his beautiful place, near Edinburgh. After our walk in his grounds, he accompanied us some way into the city, and we parted in the hope to meet again at Druid Stoke, the residence of his niece and her husband, Mr. Sykes, in Gloucestershire, my friends and neighbours, and also under my own roof; a conditional promise never to be fulfilled, for before the end of another Autumn, I heard with sorrow of the lamented death of the learned and accomplished Professor; a true gentleman, amiable, kind, courteous, of polished manners and noble mien. Thus to meet, and so to part, was a bright and pleasant but sadly transient revival of "Auld lang syne."

On the following Monday my daughter and I dined at Lord Cowan's, to meet Lord Neaves and a third eminent Judge, whose cordial recognition, anticipating our host's introduction, prevented me from immediately knowing whose friendly hand grasped mine; but I soon discovered him to be Lord Ardmillan, the Chairman of the Edinburgh Meeting at the Centenary, who takes his judicial title from his paternal estate in the Land of Burns. On former visits to Edinburgh, since leaving it after twelve year's residence, the Courts and the University having been in vacation, the city seemed deserted, so many of the inhabitants having left it for their country residences, or to keep holiday in various places at home or abroad. And at each successive visit it was more sadly desolate, from the numerous friends of youth that were added to the long roll of the departed. More cheerful, happy, and agreeable recollections are associated with that last visit, probably the very last.

In the valuable lecture by Lord Neaves, LL.D., F.R.S.E., already mentioned, is the following passage:—

"Burns, as often happens in a country where the

"prudence of the people tends rather to late than to
"early marriages, had several attachments of the heart
"before he was finally united to the excellent woman
"who became his wife. To these passages in his life
"we owe some of his most beautiful poems, and in
"particular, those which were prompted by his love for
"Mary Campbell, and his recollection of her sad fate.
"The feelings thus inspired were so pure and strong as
"to have supported his Muse in the unwonted task of
"composing in English phrase the verses to 'Mary in
"Heaven,' which are almost the only specimen of his
"success when not using the vernacular dialect."

* * * * * *

"In concluding what I have to say as to Burns, I
"must now notice a remarkable limitation by which his
"powers were circumscribed. He was nearly incapable
"of writing good poetry in English, and almost the
"only exceptions to that remark are the lines to High-
"land Mary, already referred to, and 'The Song of
"Death.' This is a singular proof of the influence of
"language upon thought. As long as Burns employed
"his native language or dialect he was all-powerful, and
"could use it as the vehicle of humorous, satirical,
"pathetic, or even appalling ideas and sentiments.
"But when he betook himself to English, the spell,
"generally speaking, was broken; the mantle of inspi-
"ration seemed to drop from his shoulders, and he
"became nearly as powerless as Samson with his hair
"cut. I need not say that this practically operated to
"narrow greatly the sphere of his success; for whatever
"may have been the capabilities of the Scottish lan-
"guage in its palmy days, and however well it may still
"be adapted to simple and homely trains of thought and
"feeling, it is certain that the dialect, as it now exists,
"is incompetent to do justice to the higher forms of
"emotion. A tragedy or an epic in the Scottish dialect
"is an impossibility, or even any sustained poem of
"serious or sublime character. I am troubled to think

"how far the reputation of Burns is dependent on the "permanence of the dialect in which he wrote. The "vernacular Scotch is daily becoming more of an anti-"quarian than a popular form of speech, and the lapse "of less than a century might diminish the number of "those that thoroughly understood Burns; and although "Chaucer is still more than ever admired, notwithstand-"ing his obsolete dialect, it is only by a limited set of "students that his merits are fully felt. Burns has been "well translated into German, but I doubt if he could "be well transmuted into English."

This opinion, coming from Lord Neaves, deserves to be carefully and respectfully examined, and it opens a very interesting question.

If Burns, as suggested by his friendly critic, Dr. Moore, had exchanged his native dialect for English, the task and the constraint might have checked the flow of composition in which

> "The words come skelpin rank and file
> Amaist before I ken."

For that vernacular dialect he had spoken in the cottage, at the plough, in the harvest field, at kirk, and at market, to the men and the maidens of his beloved country. But his genius also took a loftier and a wider range. His superior talent, and continual perusal of the best English authors, especially Shakspere and Milton, soon gave him such mastery of our language that he had a rich and abundant vocabulary for the utterance of noble, bright, and beautiful thoughts; so that he surprised and charmed, by his brilliant and sensible conversation, the learned and the fashionable circles in the Scottish metropolis, then and since famous for science and for literature.

If the reader will turn to the poems referred to, it will be seen how far the theory of the inability of Burns to write good poetry in English can be maintained.

In the "Winter Night" the first twenty-four lines are

in the vernacular dialect, and the next sixty-four lines, which are not inferior to them are in English.

The "Address to Edinburgh" of fifty-six lines, with its grand and graphic description of the Castle and of Holyrood, is English.

"The contrast," says Lockhart, "between his own "worldly circumstances and intellectual rank, was never "more bitterly nor loftily expressed than in some of the "stanzas of 'Man was made to Mourn,'" which is a dirge of eighty-eight lines, entirely English; in which, also, are "the vigorous couplets" written at the Fall of Fyers, and at the inn at Kenmore, which the same competent critic commends as "among his best English heroics."

And also the lines on scaring waterfowl at Loch Turit, ending—

"Or, if man's superior might,
Dare invade your native right,
On the lofty ether borne,
Man with all his powers you scorn;
Swiftly seek, on clanging wings,
Other lakes and other springs;
And the foe you cannot brave,
Scorn at least to be his slave."

The charming song of forty lines, "Now westlin' winds and slaught'ring guns," is essentially English.

Of "The Vision," the first nine stanzas are vernacular, of the next fourteen the greater part is English, while the whole of the Second Duan, of twenty-four stanzas, including the finest part of the poem, is English.

The last, and not least, instructive example to which I will refer, is the "Cotter's Saturday Night," which begins in the vernacular, but at the solemn call to worship, the Poet throws off, indeed, his Doric mantle, but only that he may soar aloft, and, in pure English, the celestial melody is rapturously prolonged to the close.

Chaucer, the Father of English Poetry, who lived from 1328 to 1400, abounds with peculiar beauties. But his works are so voluminous, and contain so much which the refined taste of this age rejects, that we are glad to read what is pure, simple, and beautiful, in judicious abridgements of them. The quaint old dialect is his proper costume, and, with a glossary, it is about as readily understood as the Scotch of Burns, a large portion of whose poems need no glossary, but help to explain the context. Indeed, the difficulty of understanding him has been much exaggerated, and would vanish on a second or third perusal, which, with such poetry, is not a task but a delight.

The minute and accurate delineation of Chaucer is like the painting of Holbein, or the Brothers Van Eyck, and as true to nature. He loved the daisy as Burns did, and thus he describes that "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower" in the prologue to the "Legend of Good Women."

"As I said erst, when comen in the May,
That in my bed there daweth me no day,
That I n'am up and walking in the mead,
To see this flow'r against the sunne spread,
When it upriseth early in the morrow,
That blessful sight softeneth all my sorrow.
So glad am I when that I have presence
Of it, to doen it all reverence,
As she that is of all flowres the flow'r,
Fulfilled of all virtue and honour,
And ever alike fair and fresh of hue
As well in winter as in summer new.

* * * * * *

That well by reason men it call may,
The daisie, or els the eye of the day,
The emprise and flowre of flowres all."

And here is another bright vision of early morn, from

the flower and the leaf, about "the springing of the gladsome day"—

"And to a pleasant grove I gan to pass,
Long ere the brighte sun uprisen was,
In which were oakes great, straight as a line,
Under the which the grass so fresh of hue
Was newly sprung, and an eight foot or nine
Every tree well from his fellow grew,
With branches broad, laden with leaves new,
That sprungen out against the sunne sheen,
Some very red, and some a glad, light green."

Then he minutely describes a woodland path, and the arbour to which it leads—

"And to the arbour side was adjoining
This fairest tree of which I have you told,
And at the last the bird began to sing,
When he had eaten what he eaten would,
So passing sweetly, that by many fold
It was more pleasant than I could devise,
And when his song was ended in this wise.

The nightingale with so merry a note
Answered him, that all the wood yrung
So suddenly, that as it were a sot,*
I stood astonished, and was with the song
Through ravished, that till late and long,
I newist in what place I was, nowhere,
Again methought she sung e'en by mine ear.

Wherefore I waited† about busily
On every side, if I her might see,
An at the last I gan full well espy
Where she sat in a fresh green laurel tree,
On the farther side, even right by me,
That gave so passing a delicious smell,
According to the eglantere full well.

* One stupified. † Watched.

Whereof I had so inly great pleasure,
As methought I surely ravished was
Into Paradise, wherein my desire
Was for to be, and no farther to pass,
As for that day, and on the sote* grass
I sat me down, for as for mine intent,
The birdes song was more convenient."

Thus Chaucer, who had studied at both the English Universities, who was a courtier of Edward the Third, and brother-in-law of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, was of kindred, by divine poesy, with the Ayrshire ploughman; and not only when describing the spring, and the grove, and its charming songsters, but also those fairest works of creation who kindled his poetic ardour, his countrywomen of every degree.

The heroine of the "Book of the Duchess" is described by Chaucer at length and with graphic touches, which produce a life-like picture of a lady of rank of the 14th century.

"I saw her dance so sweetely,
And laugh and play so womanly,
And looken so debonairly,
So goodly speak, and so friendely,
That certes I trow that evermore,
N' as seen so blissful a treasure.
For every haire on her head,
The soth to say it was not red,
Ne neither yellow nor brown it was,
Methought most like to gold it was
And whiche eyen my lady had,
Debonaire, good, and glad, and sad.

* * * * *

I have no wit that can suffice
To comprehend her beauty,

* Sweet.

But this much I dare say, that she
Was white, ruddy, fresh, lively hued,
And every day her beauty newed.

* * * * *

So pure suffrant was her wit,
And reason gladly she understood,
It followed well she coulde good,
She used gladly to do well.
These were her manners every deal,
Therewith she loved so well right,
She wrong do woulden to no wight;
No wight, he might do her no shame,
She loved so well her owne name."

The "Canterbury Tales" are Chaucer's masterpiece, graphic, lively, humorous, and pathetic. The following sketches were evidently taken from the life. Of the Friar he says—

"Full sweetely heard he confession,
And pleasant was his absolution.
He was an easy man to give pennance
There as he wist to have a good pittance;
For unto a poor order for to give,
Is signe that a man is well yshrive,*
For if he gave he durste make avant,
He wiste that a man was repentant:
For many a man so hard is of his heart,
He may not weep, although him sore smart;
Therefore instead of weeping and prayers,
Men must give silver to the poor friars."

The Pardoner, his bulls, wonder-working relics, and preaching are partly but vividly described in these lines—

* Shriven.

"By this gaude have I wonnen year by year,
A hundred marks since I was Pardoner,
I stande like a clerk in my pulpet,
And when the lewed* people is down yset.
I preache so as ye have heard before,
And tell a hundred false japes† more;
Then pain I to stretchen forth my neck,
And east and west upon the people I beck,
As doth a *dove sitting upon a barn;*
My handes and my tongue gone so yearn,‡
That it is joy to see my business,
Of avarice and suche cursedness,
Is all my preaching for to make them free,
To give their pence, and namely unto me;
For mine intent is nought but for to win,
And nothing for correction of sin."

Here is a picture of a corpulent monk in motion—

"Fat as a whale, and walked as a swan."

Long suffering patience in woman is set forth with exquisite tenderness and beautiful simplicity in the story of Griselda, which Chaucer obtained from Petrarch when he went to visit him in Italy. The young Marquis of Saluzzo was petitioned by his numerous vassals and dependents to marry, lest his estates should pass to a stranger. He chose the daughter of one of them—a poor, old villager. He had often seen her, modest and beautiful, engaged in her domestic duties, and with tender and zealous care ministering to the wants of her aged father. The consent of both was readily obtained to Griselda's marriage and unexpected elevation to the rank of Marchioness, but first, the Marquis required a promise of implicit, uncomplaining submission to his sovereign will.

* Ignorant. † Jests, tricks. ‡ Briskly.

"Wond'ring upon this thing, quaking for dread,
She saide: Lord indigne and unworthy,
Am I to thilk honour that ye me bid,
But as ye will yourself, right so will I,
And here I swear that never willingly
In work nor thought I will you disobey,
For to be dead, though we were loth to die."

Griselda wears her honours meekly, is as good and faithful a wife as she had been a daughter, and the happiness of the Marquis and his wife is crowned by the birth of a girl. He is soon tempted to try how far she will keep her vow of obedience, and while she is happily nursing her infant, he tells her, on some pretext, that it must be taken from her, and his mandate is sternly executed by an officer, who is directed to take the babe to Boulogne secretly, to be kept and educated by his sister, the Countess of Pavia.

"But at the last to speaken she began,
And meekely she to the sergeant pray'd
(So as he was a worthy gentleman)
That she might kiss her child ere that it died;
And in her barme,* this little child she laid,
With full sad face and gan the child to bliss,
And lulled it, and after gan it kiss,
And thus she said in her benigne voice,
Farewell, my child, I shall thee never see."

She hid her heart's grief, never alluded to her lost darling, but went sadly about her home duties to all appearance as before. Four years afterwards, a boy was born, which gave great joy to all, and for two years it was uninterrupted; but again her domestic tyrant dealt with her son as he had done with her daughter, and she bore the severe trial as meekly. His vassals murmured against him, suspecting that he had murdered his children; but he was stirred up to further acts of

* Lap.

capricious tyranny. He contrived to get a dispensation from the Pope to put away his wife, on the false plea that her ignoble birth caused "rancour and dissension between his people and him." And she, leaving her ring, jewels, and clothing, was dismissed to her poor father's cottage barefoot, wretched, forlorn.

"Though clerkes praisen women but a lite,*
There can no man in humblesse him acquite
As women can, ne can be half so true
As women be, but it be fall of new."†

But that ingenious and insatiable tormentor of a patient wife would not desist, till she had fulfilled her vow to the uttermost farthing. It was announced that a new and young bride was to arrive at the castle, accompanied by a younger brother. A banquet was to be given to welcome her, and the Marquis required Griselda to superintend the arrangements for her reception, and she was brought in and asked by the Marquis

"How liketh thee my wife and her beauty?"

Thus finishing his long course of mental vivisection. Griselda replied—

"A fairer never saw I none than she,
'I pray to God give you prosperity.'
One thing beseech I you, and warn also
That ye ne pricke with no tormenting
This tender maiden, as ye have done me."

* * * * * *

"This is enough, Griselda mine (quod he),
Be now no more aghast or evil afraid,
I have thy faith and thy benignity,

* Little. † If it were, it would be a novelty.

As well as ever woman was assayed,
In great estate and poorely arrayed,
Now know I, dear wife, thy steadfastness,
And her in armes took and gan to kiss.

* * * * *

This is thy daughter, which thou hast supposed
To be my wife; that other faithfully
Shall be mine heir, as I have aye disposed.
Take them again, for now may'st thou not say
That thou hast lorn none of thy children tway."

"When she this heard, aswoone down she falleth
For piteous joy; and after her swooning
She both her younge children to her calleth,
And in her armes piteously weeping,
Embraceth them, and tenderly kissing,
Full like a mother, with her salt tears
She bathed them, both their visage and their hairs."

* * * * * *

"O! many a tear on many a piteous face,
Down ran of them that stooden her beside,
Unnethe* abouten her might they abide."

After all this wantonly afflicted penance, the meek Griselda is allowed to be happy with her husband and her children—"All's well that ends well." And Chaucer tells us that the moral of his tale is not that all wives should be Griseldas, for that were impossible, and moreover inexpedient.

"But for that every wight in his degree
Shoulde be constant in adversity.

* * * * * *

* Scarcely.

For since a woman was so patient
Unto a mortal man; well more we ought,
Receiven all in gree* what God us sent."

These accurate and vivid pictures of natural scenery, of female loveliness in form and feature, and character, awakening tender emotions of love and pity, these touches of sly, sarcastic humour had their counterpart centuries later in the pages of Burns, partly in a language not unlike that of the old English bard, and as intelligible to the modern English reader, who will delight in them, notwithstanding the quaint old English or modern Scotch, if only he have the mind to appreciate and the heart to feel the sentiments which are not peculiar to any age or nation.

Spenser wrote, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, his "Faery Queene," in the language of the time of Chaucer. His great poem is a compound allegory, and even simple allegory is, sometimes often difficult for an author to sustain, and for a reader to follow. The path in the Pilgrim's Progress is so plain, and so illuminated by heavenly light, that old and young, learned and unlearned, follow it with pleasure and instruction.

Spenser chose Fairyland for the scene of his marvellous adventures, and the twelve cardinal virtues personified for his heroes; and these heroes are Prince Arthur and his knights contending with the opposite vices in the chivalrous style of knight-errantry, which Italian and Spanish writers illustrated, and which Cervantes so successfully ridiculed.

But while there are Holiness, and Temperance, and Justice, with their appropriate knightly personifications, and Despair, and Pride, and the Sirens, and Prince Arthur, in quest of the Faery Queene, there is a double allegory in which that visionary personage becomes Queen Elizabeth or Gloriana, and her attendants in fairy land are those grave statesmen and gay courtiers,

* *De bon gre*, in good will.

and brave warriors, who made Elizabeth's reign in England illustrious.

The taste for labyrinths has gone by, and we read Spenser for the genuine poetry with which his legendary cantos abound. His stanza was adopted by Thomson in his "Castle of Indolence," with perfect success, and Burns has followed his example in "The first Pastoral in any Language." Therefore, let us cull a few unfading flowers of poesy from the "Faery Queene."

In the "Legend of the Knight of the Red Crosse or of Holinesse," he and Una visit the Cave of Despair.

"Ere long they come where that same wicked wight,
His dwelling has low in a hollow cave,
Far underneath a craggy cliff ypight,*
Darke, dolefull, dreary, like a greedy grave,
That still for carrion carcases doth crave;
On top whereof ay dwelt the ghastly owle,
Shrieking his baleful note, which ever drave
Far from that haunt all other chearefull fowle,
And all about it wand'ring ghostes did wayle and howle.

And all about old stockes and stubs of trees,
Whereon nor fruit nor leafe was ever seen,
Did hang upon the ragged, rocky knees,
On which had many wretches hanged beene,
Whose carcases were scattered on the greene,
And thrown about the cliffs. Arrived there
That barehead knight,† for dread and doleful teene,‡
Would fain have fled, ne durst approachen neare,
But th' other forst him staye, and comforted him in feare.

* Placed.

† Not the Redcross Knight, but Trevisan, who had visited the c before. ‡ Trouble.

That darksome cave they enter, where they find
That cursed man, low sitting on the ground,
Musing full sadly in his sullein mind;
His griesly locks, long growen and unbound,
Disordered hong about his shoulders round,
And hid his face, through which his hollow eyne
Lookt deadly dull, and stared as astound;
His rawbone cheeks, through penurie and pine,
Were shronke into his jawes as he did never dine."

His ragged clouts pinned together with thorns, and the corpse of a suicide beside him, with a rusty knife in the deadly bleeding wound, complete the horrid picture. Despaire was so bewitchingly eloquent as to the duty of performing the happy despatch in like manner, that the Redcrosse Knight wavered, and Despaire brought him swords, ropes, poison, and fire.

"But when as none of them he saw him take,
He to him raught a dagger, sharpe and keen,
And gave it him in hand; his hand did quake
And tremble like a leaf of aspen greene,
And troubled blood through his pale face was seene
To come and goe, with tidings from the heart,
As it a ronning messenger had been;
At last resolved to work his finall smart,
He lifted up his hand, that back again did start."

But the fair and holy Una snatched the cursed knife, and threw it to the ground.

"Come, come away, fraile, feeble fleshly wight,
Ne let vaine wordes bewitch thy manly heart,
Ne devilish thoughts dismay thy constant spright,
In heavenly mercies has thou not a part?
Why should'st thou then despeire that chosen art?

Where justice growes, there growes the greater grace,
The which doth quench the brond of hellish smart;
And that accurst handwriting doth deface,
Arise, Sir Knight, arise, and leave this cursed place."

In the "Legend of Temperance," Sir Guyon is allured, like Ulysses, by the Siren songs of Pleasure—

"O thou fayre sonne of gentle faery,
That art in mightie armes most magnifyde
Above all knights that ever bataille tryde,
O turn thy rudder hitherward awhile;
Here may thy storm-bett vessell safely ryde;
This is the port of reste from troublous toyle,
The worlde's sweet inn from pains and wearisome turmoyle.

With that the rolling sea resounding soft,
In his big base them fitly answered,
And on the rockes the waves breaking aloft,
A solemne meane unto them measured,
The whiles sweet zephyrus lowd whistled
His treble, a strange kind of harmony,
Which Guyon's senses softly tickeled,
That he the boteman bade row easily,
And let him heare some part of their rare melody."

Rescued from that and other dangers, the Knight, after landing on an enchanted shore, travelled through an earthly paradise, with bowers of bliss, hills and dales, crystal streams, sparkling fountains, and balmy breezes, where art and nature "each did the other's worke more beautifye," and fairy forms of false, deceitful beauty, strove to bewitch and betray, but under safe guidance he was enabled to resist them all.

'Eftsoones they heard a most melodious sound
Of all that mote delight a daintie eare,
Such as at once might not on living ground,
Save in this paradise, be heard elsewhere;

Right hard it was for wight that did it heare
To read what manner music that mote bee;
For all that pleasing is to living eare
Was there concerted in one harmonie,
Birdes, voices, instruments, windes, waters all agree.

The joyous birdes, shrowded in cheerfull shade,
Their notes unto the voice attempered sweet;
The angelicall soft-trembling voyces made,
To the instruments divine respondence meet;
The silver sounding instruments did weep
With the base murmure of the waters' fall;
The Waters' fall with difference discreet.
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call
The gentle warbling wind low answered to all."

These extracts may suffice to show with what natural grace and sweetness our English poets Chaucer and Spenser sang.

Spenser was a cotemporary of Shakspere in that æra so preeminently distinguished in the literary history of our country and of Europe, extending from the latter part of the sixteenth century and the middle of the reign of Queen Elizabeth to 1660, the restoration of Charles the Second. Besides those great poets, Milton also shone among that constellation of men of original and powerful genius, Bacon and Sydney, Napier the inventor of logarithms, Hooker and Sir Walter Raleigh, and of divines, Jeremy Taylor, whose prose Jeffrey praised as containing "more of the body and soul of poetry than all the odes and epics that have since been produced in Europe,"—adding that as much may be said of large portions of Barrow, of Hooker and of Bacon.

But what inestimable treasures of sacred learning were placed within the reach of all people by the translation of the books of the Old and New Testaments into our native tongue, in its simplicity, purity, and strength. It was like a renewed revelation of the most momentous and animating truths, long withheld and

concealed from their investigation; the most instructive histories, the loftiest strains of poetry and eloquence; pure religion and morality taught by divine precept and by one perfect life, and illustrated by the most memorable events and by rare and beautiful examples; with such aids and such motives to obedience as human philosophy never could supply.

That sudden emancipation and enlightenment of the minds of men after long bondage and obscurity had its natural consequence in some partial abuses of unaccustomed liberty and light. But so great and so glorious have been the results, that the feeble cry of those who in these latter days would disparage the Reformation, should be lost in the general thanksgiving of a grateful people who can rejoice with their own Milton when he thus hailed its dawn. "When I recall "to mind at last, after so many dark ages, wherein "the huge overshadowing train of error had almost "swept the stars out of the firmament of the Church; "how the bright and blissful reformation (by divine "power) struck through the black and settled night "of ignorance and antichristian tyranny, methinks a "sovereign and reviving joy must needs rush into the "bosom of him that reads or hears; and the sweet "odour of the returning gospel imbathe his soul with "the fragrancy of heaven. Then was the sacred Bible "sought out of the dusty corners where profane false-"hood and neglect had thrown it, the schools opened, "divine and human learning raked out of the embers of "forgotten tongues, the princes and cities trooping "apace to the new erected banner of salvation; the "martyrs with the unresistible might of weakness, "shaking the power of darkness, and scorning the fiery "rage of the old dragon."

The natural and beautiful poetry of the old English dramatists was discouraged and indeed suppressed during the Civil war, and Commonwealth. On the return of Charles the Second he introduced French fashions, not only in his gay and profligate court but also in literature. The plays of Shakspere far excelling all,

in poetry and dramatic skill are unfettered by the artificial unities and by rhyme, like those of Corneille and Racine. Within the compass of a play of Shakspere is a condensed historical novel, with every proper variety of time and place,—the events of a lifetime in the space of a few hours. The scenes change, not only from England to Denmark, from one part of Scotland or of Italy to another, but from the events and persons of actual life to realms of the imagination, where the wonder working poet wanders fancy free and transports the reader or spectator along with him, obedient to the spell by which he creates the supernatural according to nature. Shakspere's knowledge of the Bible and his appropriate and effective use of that knowledge is apparent in many of his plays. In what other uninspired writer shall we find the course of crime from its first conception to its final catastrophe described so impressively as in Macbeth? Satanic agents make a promise to the ear to be broken to the hope. The serpent and the woman tempt the man. The evil thoughts suggested by the witches are fed and fostered into evil designs. Then come opportunity and a wicked wife to work upon his weaker but better nature, and to urge him to stain his name, tarnish his glory, and destroy his peace by a foul crime. She stimulates his flagging ambition to win the crown, dissuades his fears, upbraids his cowardice, "had he not resembled my father as he slept I had done it." The crown is gained by murder, but with it come fear, hypocrisy, falsehood, remorse, misery, more murders to conceal the first, and to secure the bad and worthless prize. Henceforth the lives of the two criminals are a downward course of guilt and of misery, which their royal honours cannot mitigate. The ghastly shadows of crime and an accusing conscience haunt and affright their feasts, and disturb their repose, with the agony of unrest and dreams of terror. What a vivid commentary on that passage of scripture, "when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death" has Shakspere provided in that masterpiece!

Dryden adopted the practice of writing tragedies in rhyme which was introduced by the Earl of Orrery in compliance with the acquired French taste of Charles the Second. He wrote a defence of it, which he refuted by his own experience; for having composed a great many rhyming tragedies which were failures "he seems" says Dr. Johnson "to have grown ashamed of making them any longer." Before he abandoned that practice he and Sir William Davenant took upon themselves to alter Shakspere's beautiful play of the Tempest.

Mr. Aubrey who wrote a life of Milton and was acquainted with Dryden said that he asked Milton's permission to put the "Paradise Lost" into rhyme. "Ay!" said its great author "you may tag my verses if you will." Milton had indeed fallen upon evil days of degenerate taste when Rymer in an essay addressed to Fleetwood Sheppard in 1678 presumed to write. "With the remaining tragedies I shall also send you "some reflections on that Paradise Lost of Milton's "which some *are pleased to call a poem.*"

Four years before that idle sarcasm was written, Milton had passed from "ever during dark" into "Holy Light," and to the exalted rank which a grateful country now assigns to him amongst her most illustrious dead.

Although Dryden was the best writer of heroic verse in our language, his plays in blank verse are considered to be his best; while his rhyming plays are pronounced by the best judges to have been utterly unworthy of his genius. His comic characters says Lord Macaulay "are without mixture loathsome and despicable." "He was utterly destitute of the power of exhibiting real human beings." His best portraits were not likenesses but strong caricatures. "For most of his pictures seem "like Turkey carpets to have been expressly designed "not to resemble anything in the heavens above, or on "the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth."

"He was perhaps the greatest of those designated as "the critical poets; and his literary career exhibited on

"a reduced scale, the whole history of the school to "which he belonged, the rudeness and extravagance of "its infancy, the propriety, the grace, the dignified good "sense, the temperate splendour of its maturity; his "imagination was torpid till it was awakened by his "judgement. He began with quaint parallels and "empty mouthing; he gradually acquired the energy of "the satirist, the gravity of the moralist, the rapture of "the lyric poet. The revolution through which English "literature has been passing from the time of Cowley to "that of Scott may be seen in miniature within the "compass of his volumes."

The time of Cowley who lived during the reign of Charles the First, and died seven years after the restoration in 1660, marked the starting point of that revolution in literature to which Lord Macaulay refers.

Cowley was the last and the best of the metaphysical poets, an accomplished scholar, a man of great learning and of brilliant wit. His Ode on Wit is very celebrated; Dr. Johnson highly commends the following passage in which Cowley condemns exuberance of wit.

> Yet 'tis not to adorn and gild each part,
> That shows more cost than art.
> Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;
> Rather than all things wit, let none be there.
> Several lights will not be seen,
> If there be nothing else between.
> Men doubt, because they stand so thick-i-th'sky,
> If those be stars that paint the galaxy.

The Chronicle, in which he gives a playful, fanciful enumeration and description of the long line of female sovereigns supposed to have ruled his fickle heart, is an "airy frolick of genius" flowing with ease, sprightliness, and a mirthful gaiety said to have been characteristic of Cowley and is unequalled in its way by any other writer.

THE CHRONICLE.

A BALLAD.

Margarita first possest,
If I remember well, my breast,
Margarita first of all;
But when awhile the wanton maid
With my restless heart had play'd
Martha took the flying ball.

Martha soon did it resign
To the beauteous Catherine;
Beauteous Catherine gave place
(Though loth and angry to part
With the possession of my heart)
To Eliza's conquering face.

Eliza till this hour might reign,
Had she not evil counsels ta'en
Fundamental laws she broke
And still new favorites she chose,
Till up in arms my passions rose,
And cast away her yoke.

Mary then, and gentle Anne,
Both to reign at once began,
Alternately they sway'd;
And sometimes Mary was the fair,
And sometimes Anne the crown did wear,
And sometimes both I obey'd.

Another Mary then arose,
And did rigorous laws impose
A mighty tyrant she!
Long alas should I have been
Under that iron-scepter'd queen,
Had not Rebecca set me free.

When fair Rebecca set me free,
'Twas then a golden time with me;
But soon those pleasures fled:
For the gracious Princess dy'd
In her youth and beauty's pride,
And Judith reigned in her stead.

One month three days and half an hour,
Judith held the sovereign power;
Wondrous beautiful her face!
But so weak and small her wit,
That she to govern was unfit,
And so Susanna took her place.

But when Isabella came
Arm'd with a resistless flame,
And th' artillery of her eye,
Whilst she proudly march'd about
Greater conquests to find out,
She beat out Susan by the bye.

But in her place I then obey'd
Black ey'd Bess her viceroy maid,
To whom ensued a vacancy;
Thousand worse passions then possest
The interregnum of my breast;
Bless me from such an anarchy!

Gentle Henrietta then
And a third Mary, next began;
Then Joan, and Jane, and Audria,
And then a pretty Thomasine,
And then another Katharine,
And then a long *et cætera*.

But should I now to you relate
The strength and riches of their state,
The powder, patches and the pins,
The ribbons, jewels, and the rings,
The lace, the paint, and warlike things,
That make up all their magazines.

If I should tell the politic arts
To take and keep men's hearts;
The letters, embassies, and spies,
The frowns and smiles and flatteries,
The quarrels, tears, and perjuries,
(Numberless, nameless mysteries),

And all the little lime twigs laid
By Machiavel the waiting maid;
I more voluminous should grow
(Chiefly if I like them should tell
All change of weathers that befell),
Than Holinshed or Stow.

But I will briefer with them be,
Since few of them were long with me,
An higher and a nobler strain
My present Emperess doth claim,
Helenora first of the name
Whom now grant long to reign.

In a far different style of the false taste and forced conceits of the metaphysical school are the following love verses.

THE GIVEN HEART.

Woe to her stubborn heart, if once mine come
Into the selfsame room,
'T will tear and blow up all within,
Like a granado shot into a magazine.

Then shall love keep the ashes and torn parts
Of both our broken hearts;
Shall out of both a new one make,
From her's th' alloy, from mine the metal take.

ALL OVER LOVE.

My affection no more perish can
Than the first matter that compounds a man :
Hereafter, if one dust of me
Mix'd with another's substance be,
'Twill leaven that whole lump with love of thee.

Let nature if she please, disperse
My atoms over all the universe,
At the last they easily shall
Themselves know and together call ;
For thy love, like a mark, is stamp'd on all

MY DIET.

On a sigh of pity I a year can live ;
One tear will keep me twenty at least ;
Fifty a gentle look will give ;
An hundred years on one kind word I'll feast ;
A thousand more will added be,
If you an inclination have for me,
And all beyond is vast eternity !

Surely this is a style of courtship that no lady can understand. For who would accept the gift of a heart of metal just going to blow up and destroy like a bombshell; or care for the affection of a masculine compound of atoms ready to be scattered like March dust; or to have a lover with a bill of fare only fit for a skeleton or an Egyptian mummy. Not all the wit, learning, and ingenuity of Cowley could perpetuate the taste for such absurdity.

The genius of Dryden was too robust to endure those once fashionable follies for long, and he forsook them, as he repented of still graver errors, of which both his predecessors and contemporaries were guilty. "I have "pleaded guilty" he says "to all thoughts and ex- "pressions of mine that can be truly accused of "obscenity, immorality or profaneness, and I retract "them."

Of the lives of the British poets by Dr. Johnson, one of the very best is his life of Dryden, and in that admirable biography his merits as an author are thus comprehensively stated. "He had more music than "Waller, more vigour than Denham and more nature "than Cowley."

Of Dryden's works it was said by Pope, that "*he could select from them better specimens of every mode of poetry than any other English writer could supply.*" "Perhaps," says Dr. Johnson "no nation ever produced "a writer that enriched his language with such a variety "of models. To him we owe the improvement, "perhaps the completion of our metre, the refinement "of our language, and much of the correctness of our "sentiments. By him we were taught *sapere et fari*, to "think naturally and express forcibly; he taught us that "it was possible to reason in rhyme; he showed us the "true bounds of a translator's liberty. What was said of "Rome adorned by Augustus may be applied by an "easy metaphor to English poetry embellished by "Dryden; *lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit*, he "found it brick and he left it marble."

Pope wrote of him—

> Waller was smooth; but Dryden taught to join
> The varying verse, the full resounding line,
> The long majestic march and energy divine.

His second ode for St. Cecilia's day, surpassing the first which is of very high merit "has been always "considered, as exhibiting the highest flight of fancy "and the exacting nicety of art. This is allowed to "stand without a rival. If indeed there is any "excellence beyond it in some other of Dryden's "works that excellence must be found. Compared "with the ode on Killigrew it may be pronounced "perhaps superior in the whole, but without any single "part, equal to the first stanza of the other.

Such is Dr. Johnson's opinion, and as the former ode is more generally known I will give as a single specimen of Dryden's poetry, that first stanza of

AN ODE

To the pious memory of the accomplished young lady, Mistress Anne Killigrew, excellent in the two sister arts of

POESY AND PAINTING.

"Thou youngest virgin, daughter of the skies,
Made in the last promotion of the blest;
Whose palms, new plucked from paradise,
In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
Rich with immortal green above the rest;
Whether adopted to some neighbouring star,
Thou roll'st above us, in thy wand'ring race,
Or in procession fixed and regular,
Mov'd with the heaven majestic pace,
Or called to more superior bliss,
Thou tread'st with seraphims the vast abyss;
Whatever happy region is thy place,
Cease thy celestial song a little space;
Thou wilt have time enough for hymns divine,
Since heaven's eternal year is thine.
Hear then a mortal muse thy praise rehearse,
In no ignoble verse;
But such as thy own voice did practise here,
When thy first fruits of poesy were given;
To make thyself a welcome inmate there,
While yet a young probationer,
And candidate of heaven."

Criticism, which has been practised so variously and so extensively in Reviews, Magazines, and Newspapers, during the present century, was almost unknown, when Dryden wrote his admirable "Essay on Dramatick Poesy," which entitles him to the rank of the Father of English Criticism.

The greater portion of his prose writings are critical dissertations, which, as a man of learning, a poet, a translator of poetry, and a dramatist, he was so well qualified to write, with ease, gracefulness, and vigour. His general precepts have been useful guides to many critics who came after him, and may still be studied with pleasure and advantage.

No better or more appropriate example of his high merit as a prose writer need be given, than his critical eulogy of Shakspere—"He was the man, who, of all "modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest "and most comprehensive soul. All the images of "nature were still present to him, and he drew them not "laboriously, but luckily. When he describes anything, "you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who "accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the "greater commendation; he was naturally learned; he "needed not the spectacles of books to read nature, "he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot say "he is everywhere alike; were he so, I should do him "injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. "He is many times flat, insipid; his comick wit "degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into "bombast. But he is always great, when some great "occasion is presented to him; no man can say he ever "had a fit subject for his wit, and did not then raise "himself as high above the rest of poets.

"Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.

"The consideration of this made Mr. Hales, of Eton, "say, that there was no subject of which any poet ever "writ, but he would produce it much better done in "Shakspere; and however others are now generally "preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, "which had cotemporaries with him, Fletcher and "Jonson, never equalled them to him, in their esteem; "and in the last King's court, when Ben's reputation "was at the highest, Sir John Suckling, and with him

"the greater part of the courtiers, set our Shakspere "far above him.

* * * * * *

"If I would compare him with Shakspere, I must "acknowledge him the more correct poet, but Shaks- "pere the greater wit. Shakspere was the Homer or "father of our dramatick poets; Jonson was the Virgil, "the pattern of elaborate writing. I admire him; but "I love Shakspere."

Dryden's ample tribute to the genius of Shakspere was paid at a time when the general taste was so perverse and depraved, as to give undue preference to far inferior authorship. It is now fully accepted as a just eulogy of his transcendant talents and established fame. And those who have read and appreciated Burns will recognise in him some of the best qualities of those true poets, of whom Shakspere is chief, and of whom it may be said, as his great compeer, Milton, hoped, regarding himself, "that he might perhaps leave some- "thing so written to aftertimes, as they should not "willingly let die." There is no doubt of that now, as regards the best poetry of Burns, and we may hope that the same disposition will prevail with a very remote posterity. Such poems of his as had their origin and their first celebrity in transient, religious, and political controversies will be less and less regarded as years roll on; but those which embody his purest, noblest, and best thoughts, struck off with nature's fire, and that touch all hearts, will survive the changes of time, the vicissitudes of taste, and those caprices of fashion, which may occasion the temporary neglect even of a Shakspere.

The lapse of nearly a century has produced very great social changes in these islands, and they proceed at a rapid pace. We are daily becoming less insular, and more cosmopolitan. Steam travelling by sea and land, the increased facilities of the Post Office and the telegraphs, and the multitudinous publications of the daily and periodical press, with the incessant activity of

trade and manufactures, assimilate town and country. The cities pour forth their myriads, who banish seclusion, and people former solitudes with workers in manufactories and mines, and the railways convey excursionists all over the kingdom. In 1816, I visited Loch Katrine and the Trosachs, when there was but a small hotel with a few beds, generally sufficient for the occasional visitors attracted to the scene by the recent publication of Scott's "Lady of the Lake." My second visit, after a long interval, was in company with the accomplished author of "The Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers" and his sisters, before Ayton had attained the rank of Professor of Rhetoric and *belles lettres* in the University of Edinburgh. He amused himself and us by describing a conversation he had with a simple, superstitious Highlander, who had seen a dark, strange-looking man "making music "wi' a chest, and he had a wee hairy-looking laddie." "Did you speak to the wee laddie?" "No, he didna "look canny. I said naething to him, and he said "naething to me." In short, the rare sight, at that time in those parts, of an Italian and his monkey, dressed like a boy, was awfully mysterious to the Highlander, who doubtless fancied the monkey to be such an elf as Scott has described. The small hotel was then overcrowded. On my third visit, in August, 1869, there was a large hotel, with between one and two hundred visitors, and among them Longfellow, the American poet, eminent and admired in our country as much as in his own. After dinner, while I sat before the hotel, in the open air, watching the sun's declining rays gilding the summits of Ben Ann and Benvenue, and casting dreamy shadows along their rugged sides, the poet placed himself beside me. Some of his first sentences were about mountain climbing, which he left to his children now. Had they come later, some reference to him who had so well taught young ambition to climb moral and poetic heights in "Excelsior," would have been irresistible. He rapidly passed to the beautiful scenery before us, and to the poet whose genius had brought so many visitors from all lands as to banish the

charming solitude that inspired his muse, so that it was difficult to realise it and the story of Fitz James and Roderick Dhu, amid a promiscuous wandering crowd. After Scott, he discussed Wilson, and finding that I had often seen those distinguished men, had many questions to ask concerning them; and doubtless in such pleasant talk, and about other poets—as Burns—and other things, the evening shades would have closed around us. But we were interrupted by a self-introduced Glasgow gentleman, who broke in abruptly upon our discourse, and managed to break it off for ever.

A copy of the London *Times*, of 3rd October, 1798, published about two years after the death of Burns, is a single sheet of large foolscap, with only six columns of advertisements. It contains the official despatches relating to Lord Nelson's victory over the French fleet, at the mouth of the Nile, two months after it took place; news of the Irish Rebellion; one column of Law Report; advertisements of one birth, one marriage, and two deaths; price of the paper, sixpence.

As the leading journal of to-day is to the *Times* newspaper at the close of the last century, such, comparatively, we may roughly estimate to have been our progress during that time, throughout the country, in our knowledge of what is passing in the world around us, and in many other respects.

Under these influences the state of society in which we live, its manners and customs and characters are very different from those which Burns described, and they are still changing. It is difficult to forecast the future, and to imagine what Lord Lytton intended by his fanciful description of that Coming Race, whom he supposed to dwell in a subterranean region, in artificial light, the women volatile, who not only could fly about with their wings, but could reduce man or monster, friend or foe, to coke or cinder, with the unerring shot of a mysterious rifle.

But, without expecting anything so extraordinary, it would seem that the permanent celebrity of Burns as a poet is less likely to suffer from his dialect, than from

progressive changes in the habits and the manners of the people.

"Halloween" is a vivid picture of superstitious observances, practised at the time he wrote the poem, but they have nearly all ceased, together with the simple credulity which formerly made them attractive to the Scottish peasantry.* The grave abuses which he censured in "The Holy Fair" have happily disappeared, so that its merited satire is no longer necessary. Habits of sobriety and temperance being universal among gentlemen, while the discouragement of drunkenness in the working classes is the wish and endeavour of all who desire their welfare; bacchanalian songs are now out of place.

Love, and the fair and gentle sex, inspired some of his most esteemed poetry; but his tenderest lyrics on that theme would scarcely be appropriate to some ladies, who compete with men in the professions, in politics, in field sports, and other masculine occupations and amusements. I say nothing with regard to the propriety and utility of such arrangements, but only that they were not characteristic of the admired models of Burns.

The highways are overrun with bicycles, a modern and doubtless useful substitute for horses, which men have hitherto had all to themselves. The ladies are more pleasantly, safely, and gracefully mounted on their well-trained palfreys; and, it is to be hoped, they will never change them for any modification of the bicycle, even if it should be constructed with side saddles and pedals. Don Quixote on Rosinante, however grotesque and grim, had something chivalrous about him. But the knights errant we so often meet on their rotatory engines suggest, nothing knightly but rather by the peculiar motion of their limbs, and the solemn gravity of the performance, the remainder of a penal sentence, to be completed in the open air, under ticket of leave.

* "Halloween a descriptive poem, perhaps even more exquisitely wrought than the "Holy Fair" and containing nothing that could offend the feelings of anybody."—*Lockhart.*

Manifold changes, discoveries, and improvements, during the last century, have added to our knowledge, power, and prosperity, our advancement in science, arts, and manufactures, and, it is to be hoped, have tended to make us wiser and better. For these great national benefits we must be content to surrender some of the pleasing illusions of fiction. But it may be safely predicted that Burns, in virtue of the intrinsic excellence of his best compositions, founded in nature and in truth, will long retain his high rank among British Poets.

CHAPTER IV.

Loss of valuable letters of Burns to Robert Aiken.—Mistaken inference and misrepresentation of Mr. Allan Cunningham.—Letter to him of Miss Aiken, confirmed by letters from Burns and other proofs.—His exile to the West Indies averted by the publication of his poems.

HAVE lately read the "Life and Works of Burns," by the lamented Robert Chambers, who spoke at the Centenary Meeting in Edinburgh, in January, 1859, and died in March, 1871. With his accustomed care and diligent research, he collected from every quarter whatever could elucidate the subject of his complete biography. I feel truly grateful for the just and pleasing light in which he placed the character of my beloved and revered grandfather. His arrangement of the poems, according to their proper dates, enables me, with other evidence, to prove that Robert Aiken's friendly relations with the poet were never interrupted, and that Mr. Cunningham's allegation to the contrary, was erroneous.

I shall not here allude to the marriage of Burns with Miss Armour, further than is necessary to refute Mr. Cunningham's misstatement, that Burns having given to her a written declaration, which, under the circumstances, constituted a legal marriage, and her father having taken possession of the document, my grandfather was acces-

sory to its destruction, which gave such offence to Burns, as to put an end to their former friendship. Allan Cunningham asserted this on no better authority than the following letter, *without date or address*, which he published as having been written and sent to my grandfather's friend, Mr. Ballantine, banker, in Ayr:—

"HONOURED SIR,

"My proposals came to hand last night, and "knowing that you would wish to have it in your power "to do me a service as early as anybody, I enclose you "half a sheet of them. I must consult you, on the first "opportunity, on the propriety of sending my *quondam* "friend, Mr. Aiken, a copy. If he is now reconciled "to my character as an honest man, I would do it with "all my soul; but I would not be beholden to the "noblest being ever God created, if he imagined me to "be a rascal. *Apropos*, old Mr. Armour prevailed with "him to mutilate that unlucky paper yesterday. Would "you believe it?"

Probably this letter was written hastily in anger on hearing some false report of what had happened, but was never sent. Robert Chambers was misled by Cunningham's assertion, and, guided by its allusion to the proposals for publishing, fixed the date of the document as between the 3rd and 17th of April, 1786.

After its publication by Cunningham, Miss Aiken wrote to him as follows:—

"TO ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, ESQ.

"SIR,

"I beg to introduce myself to you as the only "surviving child (save a brother, long in India) of Mr. "Aiken, the early and unchanging friend of Burns. On "reading your first volume, there seemed nothing regard-"ing my venerated father or brother Andrew of conse-"quence to correct, though the latter was not a military "man, as you state, but a merchant, and latterly British "Consul at Riga, at which place he died in 1832. But

"I was much distressed by the impression left on the "public mind by the eighteenth letter in the sixth "volume, without date, and believed to have been "addressed to my relative, Mr. Ballantine, and would "immediately have written to you on the subject, had "not the last volume of your work been published "before I saw it.

"It was only yesterday that I learned from my cousins, "the Misses Stewart, of Afton, that a second edition is "now in the press, and I hope to anticipate the re-"publication of your sixth volume by stating that I am "sure no such letter as the above was ever received by "Mr. Ballantine, and unless I saw the autograph I can-"not believe that it was ever written by the poet. Be-"cause, however grieved my father was on his account "for his irregularities, Mr. Aiken had no knowledge of, "or interest in, the Armours, even if his principles would "have allowed him to be a party in any such transaction, "which was *impossible*. Besides, as there never was any "interruption in their friendship or correspondence, "Burns could not have applied the phrase *quondam* "*friend* to my father, and your idea, in the note, eighty-"seventh page, that they were no longer correspondents "is quite a mistake, as they never ceased to be so, till "Burns had been long in Dumfriesshire; but his beau-"tiful, pure, and interesting letters, during a period of "ten years, were, unhappily for *his friend* and our com-"fort, *lost*, as I shall now state. Having heard, in the "spring of 1796, that our friend was in very bad health, "we felt how doubly valuable his letters would be in the "event of his death, and I collected them all, and tied "them up according to their dates, laying them away "safely, as I then thought, before setting out for Dum-"fries and *Liverpool*, where my brother Andrew was "settled as a merchant, and recently married. At the "former place, I stayed some days with my uncle, Dr. "Copland, and one of those days my emaciated, but "still animated friend, Burns, spent delightfully with "me there—our last meeting! He, alas! sunk rapidly "after, and before winter, I had much communication

"with Dr. Currie, at Liverpool, our friend and medical "man, as to his proposed work, and finding a want of "letters, and knowing there were few so favourable to "the poet's memory as those to my father, I wrote to "him to send them by the mail. On going to the place "where the parcel had been deposited, *it was gone!* and "though every exertion was made *then* and often *since* to "discover and recover the letters, we could never trace "them. We were forced to conclude, that a gay youth "of some genius, then a clerk of my father, had secretly "taken them to peruse, and my demand coming un-"expectedly, he could not restore, and so destroyed "them, as he soon left his situation and the country, and "died some years after without making any discovery.

"I merely, Sir, state these circumstances to prove "that there was no interruption in the correspondence "between Burns and my father, and that, therefore, the "eighteenth letter (at least as regards the Armours) "must be spurious; besides, the statement regarding "the marriage lines in your first volume, page 97, is "quite at variance with the other story, and a much "more natural account of the matter, than that a man "of my father's station and strictly honorable feeling, "should have so nefariously interfered in such an "affair!

"I therefore trust, Sir, you will not give the eighteenth "letter or the note appended, or the conclusion of that "page 87, a place in your new edition. I sadly fear "there is no way of correcting the error in the first, "which has spread over the length and breadth of the "land, to the injury of my father's memory (though "unintentionally on your part). I know not if Miss "Stewart mentioned to you that Doonholm (not "Doonside) is the name of Mr. Fergusson's place. My "mother's brother, Mr. Hunter, married his daughter, "and their son is now the proprietor of that beautiful "spot, as well as Alloway Kirk, and all the classic "ground around the monument, which I regret you had "not visited before the publication of your 'Life of "Burns.' His son, James, was much delighted with the

"day he spent there with me. I have no unpublished "MS. of the bard, but after giving many away to his "admirers, I still possess ten or twelve original copies "of his best poems. The sacred motive which prompts "this communication, will, with a man of your feeling, "be, I hope, a sufficient apology for

Sir,

Yours &c., &c.,

GRACE AIKEN.

Ayr, 6th July, 1835."

This letter claimed the attention of Mr. Cunningham on its own merits, as having been written by the daughter of one of the earliest and best friends of Burns, and as referring to the Misses Stewart, of Afton Lodge, her cousins, whose mother, Mrs. General Stewart, of Stair, had also been the poet's early friend and patron, and who had evidently taken a similar interest in Allan Cunningham. But he neither replied to the letter, nor corrected his own blunder. I briefly adverted to the subject at the meeting at Bristol (p. 12), and when the Illustrated Edition of Burns' Works, published in Glasgow, in 1867, was advertised as being in the Press, I wrote to the Editor, Dr. Waddell, with information, which he courteously and thankfully acknowledged. He, too, had been misled by Cunningham, but my letter arrived in time to enable him to correct his error by a full and proper explanation.

By the civil and the Scotch law, marriage is a contract which may be proved by a declaration in writing, or before witnesses. The Gretna Green marriages of runaways from England, formerly so frequent, were thus contracted, the Green being just over the border, where the blacksmith and his witnesses were always in readiness to forge the fetters. Upwards of fifty years ago, while I was on a visit to Colonel Christopher Maxwell, at Gretna Hall, several of these marriages took place at the Green; and if the fugitives were pursued, it was an exciting scene, a race with four horses, for which innkeepers and postillions got a high tariff.

Mr. Chambers, after mentioning several of the friends of Burns, wrote—

"And finally Robert Aiken, perhaps the most sensible "of all to the charms of divine poesy. This Mr Aiken "to whom Burns has given the immortality of a "dedication of his "Cotter's Saturday Night" was a "legal practitioner, *scottice* writer, and also Surveyor of "Taxes in the town of Ayr. Such was his external "position in life; the internal man presents us with "warm affections, a cultivated mind, and a power of "eloquence most extraordinary for his place and time."

"* * * * He once had occasion at a large "party to make a speech in answer to a toast, his uncle, "the Rev. Dr. Dalrymple, being present. He addressed "his venerable relative in such moving terms as to draw "tears from every eye. An Irish officer caught the "infection and looking round upon the company, "wiped his cheeks and said, now can any body tell "me what is the maning of all this? Such was the "man whose notice Burns had attracted. Can we "wonder that two such men should have speedily "become attached to each other, all disparity of "worldly condition notwithstanding. Burns committed "many of his poems to the care of Mr. Aiken, and he "read them to all whom he thought likely to appreciate "them, giving them the benefit of a style of elocution "which is allowed to have been of wonderful effect. "Burns himself said 'Mr. Aiken read me into fame.'

In February 1786 Burns wrote to Mr. Richmond in Edinburgh from Mossgiel "My chief patron now is Mr. Aiken in Ayr, who is pleased to express great approbation of my works."*

To ROBERT AIKEN, Esq.,

MOSSGIEL, 3rd April, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter with double pleasure on account of the second flattering instance of

* Robert Aiken as proprietor of a farm called Whitehill could also sympathize with Burns in agricultural pursuits.

Mrs. C's notice and approbation, I assure you I

"Turn out the brunt side of my shin"

as the famous Ramsay of jingling memory says, at such a patroness. Present her my most grateful acknowledgments in your very best manner of telling truth. I have inscribed the following stanza on the blank leaf of Miss More's works:—

TO MRS. C——,

ON RECEIVING A WORK OF HANNAH MORE.

THOU flattering mark of friendship kind,
Still may thy pages call to mind
The dear, the beauteous donor!
Though sweetly female every part,
Yet such a head and more the heart,
Does both the sexes honour.
She showed her taste refined and just
When she selected thee,
Yet deviating own I must,
For so approving me.
But kind still, I mind still
The giver in the gift;
I'll bless her, and wiss her
A friend above the Lift.*

My proposals for publishing I am just going to send to the press. I expect to hear from you by the first opportunity.

I am ever dear Sir, yours,

ROBERT BURNESS.

After this he changed the spelling of his name to the orthography common in Ayrshire.

It is to be remembered that *between the 3rd and the 17th of April*, 1786, was the date of the obnoxious letter said to have been sent to Mr. Ballantine.

* Sky.

On the 30th of July in that year, Burns wrote to his friend Mr. Richmond, "my hour is come—you and I "will never meet in Britain more. I have orders "within three weeks at farthest to repair aboard the "Nancy, Captain Smith, from Clyde to Jamaica, and "to call at Antigua,—I write in a moment of rage, "reflecting on my miserable situation, exiled, abandon-"ed, forlorn."

The proposals for publishing his poems by subscription referred to in the letter, on which Cunningham founded his mistaken theory, were dated 14th of April, 1786; and on the 31st of July, the first, or Kilmarnock edition of the poems appeared, published for Burns himself, and containing the "Cotter's Saturday Night," with its dedication "to his loved and honoured, much respected friend." He did not write *quondam* friend in that or any future publication of his works, and he was not given to flattery or hypocrisy.

About this time he wrote a farewell,—the last stanza of which is:—

What bursting anguish tears my heart!
From thee my Jeany must I part!
Thou weeping answerest no!
Alas misfortune stares my face,
And points to ruin and disgrace,
I for thy sake must go;
Thee Hamilton, *and Aiken dear*,
A grateful, warm adieu!
I with a much indebted tear
Shall still remember you;
All hail then, the gale then,
Wafts me from the dear shore!
It rustles and whistles
I'll never see thee more!

Mr. Chambers writes "during August the poet seems "to have been busied collecting the money for his "poems. In all the principal towns of his own district "he had friends who had exerted themselves in

"procuring subscribers, and who were now drawing "money on his behalf. His friend *Aiken had been* "*the medium for distributing no fewer than a hundred* "*and forty five copies*, being nearly a fourth of the "whole impression." * * * * *

"In these circumstances (and in September) his "generous friends Aiken and Hamilton took some "trouble to ascertain if there was not a chance for "securing an appointment in the excise."

The publication and sale of his poems thus encouraged and promoted, was the first thing to give him hope when in despair, to bring other friends and admirers to his aid, to send him to Edinburgh on the road to fame, instead of to the West Indies, as a ruined exile. From Edinburgh he wrote to Mr. Hamilton thus cheerily.

"TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.,

"MAUCHLINE.

"Edinburgh, Dec. 7th, 1786.

"For my own affairs, I am in a fair way of becoming "as eminent as Thomas à Kempis or John Bunyan; "and you may expect henceforth to see my birth-day "inserted among the wonderful events, in the Poor "Robin's and Aberdeen Almanacks, along with the "black Monday, and the battle of Bothwell bridge.— "My Lord Glencairn and the Dean of Faculty, Mr H. "Erskine, have taken me under their wing; and by "all probability I shall soon be the tenth worthy, and "the eighth wise man of the world. Through my "lord's influence it is inserted in the records of the "Caledonian Hunt, that they universally, one and all, "subscribe for the second edition.—My subscription "bills come out to-morrow, and you shall have some "of them next post.—I have met in Mr. Dalrymple, of "Orangefield, what Solomon emphatically calls 'A "friend that sticketh closer than a brother.'—The "warmth with which he interests himself in my affairs "is of the same *enthusiastic kind which you, Mr. Aiken,*

"and the few patrons that took notice of my earlier "poetic days showed for the poor unlucky devil of a "poet."

Five days later he wrote

"To JOHN BALLANTINE Esq., Banker, Ayr,

Edinburgh, 12th December, 1786.

"I have found a worthy, warm friend in Mr. "Dalrymple of Orangefield, who introduced me to "Lord Glencairn, a man whose worth and brotherly "kindness I shall ever remember. By his interest it "is passed in the Caledonian Hunt and entered in "their books, that they are to take each a copy of the "second edition for which they are to pay one guinea. "I have been introduced to a good many of the *noblesse*, "but my avowed patrons and patronesses are the "Duchess of Gordon, the Countess of Glencairn, with "my Lord and Lady Betty (Cunningham, a sister of "the Earl) the Dean of Faculty, and Sir John White-"ford. I have likewise warm friends among the literati, "Professors Stewart, Blair, and Mr. Mackenzie "the 'Man of Feeling.' He states that Mr. Patrick "Miller had anonymously sent him ten guineas "I "am nearly agreed with Creech to print my book and "I suppose I will begin on Monday. I will send a "subscription bill or two next post, when I intend "writing to *my first kind patron Mr. Aiken. I saw his "son to day and he is well.*"

On 14th January 1787, he wrote again to Mr. Ballantine about the progress of the new edition, and a conversation with Mr. Patrick Miller as to the lease of Ellisland, concluding "My best good wishes to Mr. Aiken."

The above quotations fully confirm the statements in his daughter's letter, whose knowledge from living with her father, and whose accuracy and strict regard to truth, render them worthy of all credit. And even in the absence of the lost correspondence, the fact that her collection of the poems of Burns was so numerous,

is clear proof that Cunningham was entirely wrong in his view of the matter. I have some cause to regret that my aunt so liberally gave so many of those literary treasures "to admirers" of the bard; not a few of whom had no other claim to her generosity than their wish to possess them. Yet in 1835 she had still "ten or twelve original copies of his best poems." Those did not include the "Cotter's Saturday Night," nor his own epitaph on himself, both of which I received from her. The "Cotter's Saturday Night" I hope may long be preserved by my son and his descendants. The epitaph, which I highly prized, I gave to a Scotch gentleman of large fortune, to whose kindness, hospitality and valuable friendship I was at that time much indebted; and to whom nothing that had only a pecuniary value would have been so appropriate a gift. Mr. Chambers, who had an interview with my Aunt, mentions that she then possessed Burns' autograph copy of his epistle in rhyme to Miss Ferrier, enclosing a copy of his elegy on Sir James Hunter Blair, and Burns sent another copy to my Grandfather not made by himself, but on the fly leaf he wrote to him the only original letter of Burns in my possession, already quoted and dated in July 1787. *See page* 12.

Sir David Hunter Blair, son and heir of Sir James, I have met at Doonholm, and there for the last time, at the funeral of his cousin, my grand-uncle Mr. Hunter, who was buried in the churchyard of Ayr.

In 1790 Burns composed "Tam O'Shanter" and gave it to Grose to be published in his antiquities. He wrote to Dr. Moore from Ellisland, 28th February, 1791. "I do not know, Sir, whether you are a subscriber "to Grose's antiquities of Scotland. If you are, the "enclosed poem will not be altogether new to you. "Captain Grose did me the favour to send me a dozen "copies of the proof sheet of which this is one." Another of the twelve copies was sent to my grandfather in one of the lost letters, and was in his daughter's possession with a few notes in Burns' handwriting.

After this refutation the reader may be prepared to

adopt Mr. Lockhart's account of the matter which Cunningham mistook and misrepresented.

"By what arguments Armour prevailed on his "daughter to take so strange and painful a step we "know not; but the fact is certain, that at his urgent "entreaty she destroyed the document, which must have "been to her the most precious of her possessions; the "only evidence of her marriage."

Happily it was an evidence which Burns was both able and willing to restore at a future day, when he and his bride went to the office of Mr. Gavin Hamilton and made such declarations as proved an irregular but legally valid marriage.

In page 146 of the illustrated edition of the life and works of Burns, edited by Dr. H. Waddell, is the following letter which the editor states "came to light in Glasgow at the centenary celebration of the poet's birth, and was acquired for the late James Crum, Esq., of Busby, a devout admirer of his genius," and is the only known autograph letter to Robert Aiken extant, except that in my possession dated six or seven months later. On the 12th December, 1786, Burns wrote to Robert Aiken's friend Mr. Ballantine, in a letter above quoted, "I intend to write to my first kind patron Mr. Aiken," and two days afterwards he wrote the following letter to Robert Aiken.

"DEAR PATRON OF MY VIRGIN MUSE,

"I wrote Mr. Ballantine at large all my operations "and 'eventful story,' since I came to town.—I have "found in Mr. Creech, who is my agent forsooth, and "Mr. Smellie who is to be my printer, that honour and "goodness of heart which I always expect in Mr. "Aiken's friends. Mr. Dalrymple of Orangefield I shall "ever remember: my Lord Glencairn I shall ever pray "for. The Maker of man has great honour in the "workmanship of his lordship's heart. May he find "that patronage and protection in his guardian angel "that I have found in him! His lordship has sent a "parcel of subscription bills to the Marquiss of Graham.

"with downright orders to get them filled up with all "the first Scottish names about Court.—He has like- "wise wrote to the Duke of Montague and is about to "write to the Duke of Portland for their Grace's interest "in behalf of the Scotch Bard's subscription.

"You will very probably think, my honored friend, "that a hint about the mischievous nature of intoxicated "vanity may not be unseasonable; but alas! you are "wide of the mark.—Various concurring circumstances "have raised my fame as a Poet to a height which I am "absolutely certain I have not merits to support; and I "look down on the future as I would into the bottom- "less pit.—

"You shall have one or two more bills when I have "an opportunity of a Carrier.

"I am ever,

"with the sincerest gratitude,

"Honored Sir,

"Your most devoted humble servt.,

"ROBERT BURNS."

"*Edinr.*, 16*th Dec.*, 1786."

With these conclusive proofs Mr. Cunningham's theory of *quondam* or broken friendship and its alleged cause may be dismissed as groundless.

CHAPTER V.

Contemporaries of Burns and their descendants.—Town and county of Ayr.—Effect of poor rates.—Bonny lasses.—River Doon.—Dalrymples of Langlands, and of Orangefield, and their kindred.—Governor Macrae.—Lord Glencairn.—Dr. David Shaw.—Dr. Andrew Shaw.—Dr. Dalrymple.—Robert Aiken and his descendants.—Dr. Currie.—Grace Aiken.—Mr. Ballantine, his sister and his nephew.—Mrs. General Stewart of Stair and Afton Lodge.—Mr. Cunninghame of Enterkine.—Mr. Campbell of Fairfield.—Sir Alexander Boswell.—His Duel with Mr. Stuart.—Professors Dugald Stewart, Thomas Brown, and Sir John Leslie.—Lord Jeffrey, Henry Mackenzie.—The Rev. Archibald Alison. Scott's meeting with Burns.

ULD Ayr whom ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonny lasses."

is a borough with a charter from William the Lion in the 13th century, finely situated near the river of that name and on the shore of the firth of Clyde. A beach of firm sand extends for more than a mile from the mouth of the Ayr and its harbour to the mouth of the river Doon, and on the intermediate shore there is sea bathing in the clear salt water of the Clyde at almost every hour of the day. The opposite coast of Argyleshire and the volcanic peaks of Goatfell in Arran, are the grand boundary northwards of a channel 20 miles in breadth. The heads of Ayr and Greenan Castle beyond the Doon are very picturesque, and there is fine rocky scenery ex-

tending towards Culzean Castle, the seat of the Earls of Cassillis, and Ailsa Craig, the solitary haunt of Soland geese, and innumerable sea fowl.

The language of England and of the Scottish lowlands in the 14th and 15th centuries, was nearly the same, as may be seen by comparing Chaucer and Barbour. The progress of Scotland in civilization and wealth was slower than in England. The salaries of judges and public officers and the fees to advocates were less, the habits of all ranks were more frugal, and persons of superior education and manners engaged in employment, that in England might have been deemed unsuitable for them. Burns gladly accepted an inferior post in the excise. Merchants in small towns, shipmasters or shipowners, some of whom commanded their own vessels, intermarried with the families of the gentry.

The town of Ayr as known to Burns was little changed when I first saw it in 1807; but since then the unsightly structure of the old Tolbooth, which blocked up the main street, has been removed. Wellington Square, containing the New Courts of justice and Town Hall of elegant design, adjacent streets well built and commodious, villas in a good style of architecture have been erected, and will continue to increase. But considering the advantages of Ayr as a commercial port and as a watering place, it seems surprising that its growth has not been more rapid.

It is said that Lord Brougham's first appearance as an advocate was in a civil action tried in the small court of the old Tolbooth. The venerable old church finely situated on the river Ayr has been restored. The collections at the church door on Sundays, used nearly to suffice for the relief of the poor, which did not require more than £500 a year, till the year 1830. Poor rates were long resisted in Scottish parishes, and the deficiency in the collections was made up by voluntary contributions from the landed proprietors or principal inhabitants. But the poor law, as in England,

has changed for the worse the independent spirit, the prudent and economical habits of the working classes, who too often spend in drink and in luxury, what they used before to save to provide for their aged parents and their children, who are now left to be maintained by poor rates at an expense seven or eight times greater than formerly. The academy was in high repute, and the cost of good education there for boys living with their friends, did not exceed a few guineas a year. The classics were taught fairly, and French very thoroughly by foreign masters. The Rector's classes for Euclid, geography, elements of astronomy, and English grammar and composition, were also well taught.

As to the bonny lasses, Lord Cockburn wrote in 1844, in his memorials, "I find that Ayr still boasts of its "peculiar female beauty; I scarcely ever knew a pro- "vincial town that did not. Ayr is not behind hand: "but though on the look out, I can't say my eyes were "particularly dazzled. There was one fair figure, "however, that haunted my memory; that of her who "in former days was Marion Shaw, and is now the "widow of Sir Charles Bell. Beauty such as hers "was enough for one city. That portion of it which "belongs to the mind is as bright and as graceful as "ever; and there are few forms with which time has "dealt so gently. But the place knows her no more."

With some allowance for the lapse of thirty years since Lord Cockburn thus wrote of the friend and relation of my grandfather's family, and my own much valued and esteemed friend from early youth till now, I can still confirm his statement.

Beloved and respected by many in London and elsewhere, among other worthy employments of her prolonged life, she has promoted the circulation of the valuable scientific works of her distinguished husband Sir Charles Bell, who ranks with the Hunters, the Harveys, the Jenners of his noble profession. Not long ago on the publication of a volume of his correspondence, chiefly with his also eminent brother George Joseph Bell, advocate, author of a work of

first-rate authority on commercial law, a principal clerk of session, and professor of Scotch law in the university of Edinburgh, Lady Bell contributed to it a well written pleasing memoir of her late husband; and in 1874 she published the ninth edition of his "Bridgwater Treatise on the Hand," with his own beautiful illustrations, and preceded by an account of his "Discoveries on the Nervous System," by her brother Mr. Alexander Shaw.

Miss Shaw was not, however, the sole representative of female loveliness in Ayr before her marriage. Among her fair compeers at that time may be mentioned two daughters of Mr. Richard Campbell, who, with his wife and handsome family, lived in Ayr before he succeeded by the death of his brother, to his fortune and fine estate of Craigie, near Ayr. We were often there, and the reputation of the old city was fully sustained by Miss Jane Campbell, who married Sir Thomas Monro, Governor of Madras, and her sister Margaret, who became Lady Gordon by her first marriage, and by her second, Madame de Barnevelt. I had the pleasure of meeting them both again after they returned from India as widows, but neither of them survive. Their eldest brother, James Campbell, advocate, the friend of Lords Jeffrey and Cockburn, inherited Craigie from his father.

The town and county of Ayr, its fine rivers and beautiful scenery; Alloway Kirk, and the "Auld brig of Doon," attract innumerable visitors since Burns made them famous. Genius such as his imparts a certain degree of notoriety to persons as well as to places. Hence the interest felt by the admirers of his works in memorials of those whose names and characters he has made memorable.

Although the subject has been almost exhausted by his biographers, especially by Mr. Robert Chambers, I find that the taste for such information, at least with Scotchmen, still survives, and it may yet be gratified by some few particulars not generally known.

When Burns was born, his father, William, was

overseer and gardener to Mr. Fergusson of Doonholm, who, when young, so greatly admired the rare beauty of the place, that he then cherished the wish which his future success enabled him to gratify, by purchasing and making it his residence. He was a very amiable and kind man, and his daughter, Mrs. Hunter, to whom he left Doonholm, inherited also her father's good and estimable qualities, and they both had that tender love of animals which was characteristic of Burns. When his father removed to Mount Oliphant (the farming profits on which were insufficient to maintain his family) Mr. Fergusson assisted him with £100; and the death of their kind landlord was a great misfortune, for they fell into the hands of a stern factor. Mr. Fergusson had three other daughters, one of whom married Colonel Kelso, of Dankeith, in Ayrshire, another, Mr. Fleming, of Barochan, in Renfrewshire, who kept up the ancient sport of falconry. His estate, which came to him through a long line of ancestors, was left by a son to a distant relation. Miss Fergusson lived with Mr. and Mrs. Hunter, and in summer many friends and relatives enjoyed their hospitality at Doonholm. Mrs. Hunter died there, beloved and much regretted, 4th July, 1838. My two brothers and I through their kindness, generally spent the most of our happy holidays there every week and during the vacation. The name is descriptive of the holms or meadow lands through which the Doon's dark, clear stream flows over its rocky, pebbly bed to the sea. Its course is there overshadowed by trees, and its banks and braes slope upwards to the higher ground on which the house stands. The other neighbouring proprietors were Messieurs Crawford of Doonside, Cathcart, afterwards Lord Alloway, of Blairstone, or Auchendrain; Fergusson of Monkwood; William Fullerton of Skeldon, advocate, who married Miss Whiteside, granddaughter of Dr. Dalrymple. The river has its source in Loch Doon, near to the village of Dalmellington, and to the estate of Craigengillan, to whose owner Burns addressed some verses.

Several persons mentioned by Burns were descendants of the Ayrshire family of DALRYMPLE, OF LANGLANDS, an estate on which a considerable part of Kilmarnock is built. I have a copy of a genealogical history of the Dalrymples, of Langlands, prepared with great assiduity and skill by Mr. John Shaw, an attorney of the High Court of Madras; a son of Mr. David Shaw, writer to the Signet in Ayr and a grandson of the Rev. Dr. Shaw, of Coylton. It was privately printed, chiefly for those to whom it refers. The career of one individual mentioned in the narrative is a remarkable instance not uncommon in British annals of a rapid rise from poverty and obscurity to high rank and great wealth by energy, talent and perseverance.

CHARLES DALRYMPLE, of Langlands, writer in Kilmarnock, in 1688, was born about 1650.

His younger son, JAMES DALRYMPLE, born about 1682, married Margaret Ramsay, of Mountford, and had issue; 2nd Sarah, who married JOHN AIKEN, shipmaster, in Ayr, 4th, CHARLES, who succeeded his father as sheriff clerk of Ayrshire, and afterwards became Charles Dalrymple, of Orangefield; 5th, William, the REV. WILLIAM DALRYMPLE, D.D., who was minister of Ayr from 1746 to 1814, and married Susannah, daughter of Dr. Hunter, minister of Ayr. He died in the 91st year of his age and 68th of his ministry. He had the estate of Mount Charles near Ayr, which he sold in 1789 to Captain Robert Gairdner.

Dr. SHAW, of Coylton, married Marion Dalrymple, sister of Dr. Dalrymple.

CHARLES DALRYMPLE, was born in 1721 and died 1781. He married in 1743, Macrae, third daughter of Hugh Mc Guire, of Drumdow, and had issue,

1st, JAMES DALRYMPLE, of Orangefield.

2nd, GLENCAIRN, who married her second cousin, General Stair Park Dalrymple.

Mrs. Dalrymple's father, Hugh Mc Guire, of Drumdow, was originally a carpenter in Ayr, in poor circumstances, from which he was raised to great wealth by his wife's cousin, JAMES MACRAE, who lived in a

thatched cottage near Ayr with his widowed mother, an honest washerwoman and laundress, who was able by her industry to give him some education. When very young he left the port of Ayr, as a sailor, and when next heard of was mentioned in the records of the Madras government as Captain Macrae. It was supposed that he had risen to be Captain of a vessel in the country trade, and he won the confidence of the government, who sent him to reform abuses at the English settlement on the West Coast of Sumatra; and for his conduct in that successful mission he was still further promoted. He effected financial savings to the amount of £25,000 a year, and did other good and profitable service. Therefore the directors appointed him Deputy Governor of port St. David, and on his return from the West Coast in 1724, he took his seat as second Member of Council at Fort St. George.

In January 1725, the son of the Ayr washerwoman took his place as Governor of the Madras Presidency, which at that time and for nearly fifty years afterwards was the chief British settlement in India. The proceedings are thus recorded:—

"Monday, 18th January, 1725. The President, James Macrae, Esq., opened this consultation by telling the Board that as this was the first time of their meeting since his taking the chair, he thought it would not be improper to acquaint them of his resolutions, of which the principal was that he would prosecute the Company's interest to the utmost, and endeavour to retrieve the abuses that had crept into the management of their affairs. He added that he was determined not to interrupt in any manner the commerce of the place, but that all the inhabitants, both whites and blacks, the free merchants as well as the Company's servants, should have free liberty of trade, and that he should expect the same freedom from interruptions in what he should undertake; that he would endeavour to be as agreeable to the gentlemen as any of his predecessors, but that he was determined to maintain the privileges and immunities

belonging to the President; and he concluded by saying that he expected a ready assistance from them in the pursuit of the above resolutions, which was accordingly promised."

Mr. Shaw remarks that during Governor Macrae's tenure of office, "the relations of the East India "Company with the Nabob of Arcot remained unalter-"ed, and what may be called the domestic incidents "of the Presidency are few in number. But in all "matters connected with the trade of the place, the "reduction of the expenditure, the improvement of the "revenues, the supervision of the mint, and the adminis-"tration of justice, his proceedings are distinguished by "an indefatigable industry, a display of strong sense, "and, above all, a fulness of record far beyond those of "any of his predecessors. Nothing appeared too large or "too small for Governor Macrae. Everything received "his attention in turn, from such matters of detail as the "sorting of cloths and the better preparation of the "consultation books, up to the most difficult and "complicated questions connected with the coinage, "the customs, the quit rent, or the very doubtful cases "of appeal from the Mayor's Court. Like most men "who have risen from nothing, he was arbitrary and "occasionally harsh towards his subordinates, but he "was a valuable servant of the company, whose orders "he rigidly respected."

On the 14th of May 1730, George Morton Pitt, Esq., was appointed his successor, and on the 21st of January 1731, Governor Macrae sailed for England without wife or child, but with a fortune said to be upwards of £100,000, which he brought home in diamonds and pagodas. The only relations that he could discover were his cousin, Isabella Gairdner, daughter of his mother's brother, and wife of Hugh Mc Guire, the carpenter, who was also a performer on the violin at dances and weddings. Mrs. Mc Guire was agreeably surprised by receiving a letter from her rich cousin, in which he promised to provide handsomely for herself and her family, which promise he

amply fulfilled by giving a superior education to the sons and daughters, and by bestowing fortunes upon all of them. On re-visiting Ayr, which he left as a poor sailor boy, he was admitted a burgess in 1733, as James Macrae, late Governor of Madras.

In 1736 he bought the estate of Orangefield, in Ayrshire, and in 1739 he also bought for £25,000, the estate of Ochiltree, in the same county. He conveyed to JAMES MC GUIRE, the eldest son, the barony of Houlston, requiring him to take the name of Macrae.

ELIZABETH MC GUIRE, the eldest daughter, married 16th August, 1744, William, Earl of Glencairn, Governor Macrae having given to her for a dowry, the barony of Ochiltree and £45,000.

JAMES, the second son of that marriage, became 14th Earl of Glencairn in 1775, and died unmarried in 1791, and having been the *friend and patron of Burns*, he then wrote the "Lament on the Earl's Death." His brother, THE THIRD SON OF ELIZABETH MC GUIRE, succeeded to the peerage, which on his death became extinct, but has been claimed by Sir Thomas Montgomery Cunningham, of Corshill, Ayrshire.

MARGARET MC GUIRE, the second daughter, born in 1729, married in 1749, James Erskine of Barjarg, advocate, only surviving son of Charles Erskine, who as a Lord of Session, took the title of Lord Tinwald, and became Lord Justice Clerk. Her dower, received from Governor Macrae, appears to have been expended in the purchase of the estate of Alva, which was settled on Lord Tinwald for life, and eventually on his son James and his children, by Margaret.

MACRAE MC GUIRE, the third daughter, was married to CHARLES DALRYMPLE, Sheriff Clerk, of Ayrshire, who obtained as her dowry the Barony of Orangefield, to which their eldest son, JAMES DALRYMPLE, succeeded on his mother's death. It was he who introduced Burns to his cousin James, Lord Glencairn. James Dalrymple having lived extravagantly, found it necessary in 1791, to convey Orangefield to trustees, three of

whom were, the Rev. Dr. Dalrymple, John Ballantine, Banker in Ayr, and Robert Aiken.

The Rev. DAVID SHAW, D.D., minister of Coylton, who married Marion Dalrymple, daughter of James Dalrymple, Sheriff Clerk of Ayrshire, was the son of the Rev. Alexander Shaw, for many years Minister of Edenkillie, Morayshire.

His eldest brother was Andrew Shaw, D.D., Professor of divinity at St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, who married in 1730, Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. James Bannatyne, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, whose sister Katherine, married her cousin Hugh Blair, D.D., one of the Ministers of the High Church, and Professor of Rhetoric in the University.

He had six sons, one of whom was ANDREW SHAW, D.D., Minister of Craigie near Ayr, and he and his uncle, Dr. David Shaw, of Coylton, are both mentioned by Burns. Andrew was an able man and accomplished scholar. His brother ALEXANDER was born in Edinburgh but lived in London, and was the author of an account in manuscript of a visit to Scotland in 1795, particularly to his relation, Dr. Blair, who in his 78th year, then lived at Summerfield, near Leith. Alexander went to see his brother Dr. Andrew Shaw, at Craigie, and also his uncle DR. DAVID SHAW, who could read without spectacles and was able to perform his duties as a minister, till very near the time of his death, in 1810, in his ninety second year. The visit of Alexander to his uncle, is thus described by him.

"Not many miles from Craigie was Coylton, the "habitation of a venerable relation, Dr. Shaw, with "whom I was connected by no less a tie than that "of being his nephew. This venerable relation was, "as well as my brother, a minister of the Church, and "had grown old in the parish of Coylton, amidst the "respect and good will of all the country.

"The manse of Coylton was situated in a retired "and romantic vale on the banks of the Coil, which "gives its name to one of the three districts of "Ayrshire. The banks of the river, as it took its

"way through the narrow and sequestered vale, were "set with the hamlets of villagers or planted with "coppice woods. The Coil then flowed with a gentle "stream, but the ravages which it had made on its "banks, and which had not even spared the good "Pastor's glebe, declared that it was sometimes an "impetuous torrent. Burns, the poet of Ayrshire, "and particularly of this district, his native ground, "has bestowed on this river, which is often mentioned "in his works, the name of 'the brawling Coil.'

"I visited with great satisfaction the reverend "minister of Coylton, who received me with the "most friendly welcome. His appearance was "venerable and patriarchal. His white locks waved "loosely on his shoulders; his fresh and ruddy "countenance showed that he enjoyed a vigorous old "age. In this sequestered valley he had reared with "credit a numerous family of sons and daughters. "His wife, of equal years with himself and respectable "by her virtues, was now the companion of his age. "Two sons were engaged in active life. His family "had formerly been more numerous, but he had lost "many deserving children by death. These and other "afflictions he had endured with a firm mind, and in "the adversities of life had resembled the sage in "Spenser who

'Gently took that which ungently came.'

"I found a great pleasure in conversing with this "worthy and venerable relation, and in tracing his "quiet walks by the river side. The tranquillity of the "vale seemed to correspond with the calm and satisfied "temper of its inhabitants. His family was conducted "with the most perfect order. The day began and "closed with devotion, but the religion of the good "minister was not austere, and his prayers breathed "a calm spirit of holy trust and resignation to Provi-"dence.

"Like my brother, he held a farm, which added

"somewhat to his stipend, and enabled him the better "to indulge his hospitable disposition in the kind "entertainment of his guest.

"The manse, the river banks, the village, the "church, surrounded by its grove of venerable trees, "were all endeared to him, but he could not confine "himself within his parish bounds, and lived in intimate "correspondence with the neighbouring gentry, by "whom he was held in particular esteem.

* * * * *

"From Coylton I proceeded to Ayr, where I was "entertained by my cousin, Charles Shaw, the son of "Dr. Shaw. He was by profession a writer or attorney, "was well esteemed, and at that time held the office of "provost, or first magistrate of Ayr. He had made an "advantageous marriage with a well-accomplished "woman, and lived in a style of elegance."

Mr. Shaw's memoir and genealogy of the Dalrymple's of Langlands, supplies the following particulars respecting ROBERT AIKEN and some of his forefathers and descendants.

CHARLES DALRYMPLE, of Langlands (before-mentioned) born about 1650.

JAMES DALRYMPLE, Sheriff Clerk of Ayrshire, born about 1682, married Margaret Ramsay, sister of Dr. Ramsay, of Mountford.

JOHN AIKEN, Shipmaster, in Ayr, married Sarah Dalrymple, second daughter of the above James Dalrymple.

ROBERT AIKEN, their eldest son, the friend of Burns, married Janet Hunter, sister of Dr. Andrew Hunter, of Barjarg, Dumfriesshire, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, who married the Honourable Mainie Schaw Napier, eldest daughter of William, sixth Lord Napier.

Another brother of Mrs. Aiken was John Hunter, of Bonnytown, in Ayrshire, who married Miss Fergusson, heiress of Doonholm.

Mrs. Aiken's sister, GRACE HUNTER, married COLONEL MAXWELL, of the 30th Regiment, one of the Cardoness family.

Robert Aiken's eldest son, ANDREW HUNTER AIKEN, to whom Burns addressed his epistle "To a young Friend," married Mary, eldest daughter of Peter Freeland, merchant, Liverpool, by Miss Blair, of Dunrode, in Kirkcudbrightshire.

JOHN AIKEN, their second son, Captain of an East Indiaman, and afterwards an Indigo planter, married a daughter of General Green, and died in India, leaving two daughters.

GRACE AIKEN, unmarried, died at Ayr, 13th October, 1857, aged 80.

ANDREW HUNTER AIKEN had issue,—

PETER FREELAND AIKEN, an Advocate in Edinburgh, and afterwards a Banker in Bristol, married CONSTANCE ELIZABETH CHETWOOD, only child of Captain Chetwood, heir presumptive of Woodbrook, Queen's County, Ireland, by Eliza, daughter of Colonel Patton, Governor of St. Helena, and has five children and seventeen grandchildren.

CAPTAIN CHETWOOD having died early, JONATHAN CHETWOOD bequeathed Woodbrook to Mrs. Aiken's cousin, EDWARD WILMOT, who took the name of CHETWOOD and married LADY JANET ERSKINE, daughter of the EARL OF MAR.

RICHARD, who married his cousin, Mary Blair, daughter of Captain Blair, of the Dunrode family.

ANDREW died at the age of nineteen.

MARY married GENERAL BARON DE DRIESEN and died in 1826. Her eldest son is now General Baron de Driesen, commanding a Cavalry Brigade in the Russian army, and her three surviving daughters are Alexandrine Baroness de Kaulbars; ELLEN, Baroness de Krüdner (a widow); and Mary, wife of General de Meyer.*

My parents lived in Rodney Street, Liverpool, named after the gallant Admiral in whose fleet the stratagem of breaking the enemy's line was first practised. Mr. John

*Abridged from "Dalrymples, of Langlands," by John Shaw, Esq.

Gladstone and Mrs. Gladstone, who lived in the same street were their kind friends, and it was the birth place of his son, the eminent statesman and orator, and scholar, and also of Lord Cardwell. My earliest recollections are of Dr. Currie, the first editor of Burns; for having put two small fingers into the cog wheel of a mangle, my old and faithful nurse carried me off to him to have the wounds dressed, and his kindness in trying to divert my attention with picture books from his library, I still remember. He attended my father when ill of fever, and it was in accordance with his practice that a shower bath was brought into the house, which my eldest sister and I, both very young, made a plaything of—an ark into which we carried our toys, resolved to be happy; till fatal curiosity tempted us to pull the cord, when down came a deluge. Cries of terror brought help, and more laughter than pity for our self-inflicted misery. Rodney Street was then newly built and almost in the country, and I walked through fields to a school, the master of which was unmerciful in the use of the cane and the rod to bigger boys, by whom he was detested; and not without reason, for his abuse of those instruments was such, that he lost all his pupils a few years after I left his school to go to Ayr to be taught at the academy there, with a younger brother, before I was eight years old.*

My grandfather was confined to the house and chiefly to bed, by illness which proved fatal, several months afterwards, and he was attended by his devoted wife and daughter. From the passages already quoted concerning him it may be inferred that the domestic affections flourished under his roof. There is a pleasing union and concord between age and infancy, when the grandsire's love descends unabated in lively sympathy with the fresh feelings and bright hopes and guileless ways of his children's children. He took me to his warm heart as his "darling Englishman," and during those last months of his life I spent many hours happily in the bed-chamber of that dying christian, and many

* See Appendix, Note 1.

words of kind and wise instruction I heard from his eloquent lips. I remember his teaching me the first psalm, and his impressive comments upon it. One day the house became a house of mourning, and his daughter told us that his immortal spirit had fled, leaving the lifeless body to be buried, and that we must not fear to look upon the cold, calm, placid face of him we had loved so well. Then she led us into the death chamber, and we were very sorrowful, but not afraid to remain, or to go there again. In a few days we two little boys, as sincere and chief mourners, went with many more to lay in the grave the head of him for whom his departed friend and Scotland's greatest poet had written this epitaph.

"Know thou, O stranger to the fame
"Of this much loved, much honoured name!
"(For none that knew him need be told)
"A warmer heart death ne'er made cold."

A granddaughter of Robert Aiken, my eldest sister, had rather a remarkable history. Her ability was beyond her years, and being well educated and accomplished in music, painting and languages, handsome, amiable and agreeable, she early gained the affections of a young and distinguished Russian nobleman, of a German family, who was educated at the court of the King of Prussia, amiable and courteous as well as brave, and of similar tastes and accomplishments with herself. He is referred to in the following extracts, from the published correspondence of Sir. Charles Bell, already mentioned.

"May 21, 1814.

"I have received a letter by the Russian General the "Baron Driesen, from the physician of the Emperor "Alexander, conveying his Majesty's command, shall I "say, to pay the greatest attention to the Baron."

"He has a ball in his thigh bone."

"I met the Count Lieven and told him I should call "in Sir Everard Home."

"As the Russian Ambassador strongly recommended

"the Baron to be taken out of town, he goes to "Hampstead to day, and I shall be obliged to see him "there every day."

July 14.

"The Baron Driesen, Colonel Tawchewsky, Aiken "and the German Doctor dined here."

"August 18th."

"Russian, German, French and English, all spoken "at once mingled in strange confusion."

"When I went down to dinner I found a silver mug "on my right hand and another on my left '*En gage* "*de l'amitié de Baron de Driesen.*"

"On some pretence they had got into the room and "placed them on the table."

"Aiken whispered to me that he had £200 in his "pocket for me, but the general would not let him give "it to me. It would, he said, be more respectful to "send a special messenger to-morrow."

"Such is General Frederick Driesen of the Emperor's "Imperial Guards."

"Note.—Baron Driesen's aide-de-camp had as great a love for "Charles Bell as the General had. He wept at parting, and "waving his hat sobbed out 'Good bye better Bell.".—*Sir C. Bell's Letters to his Brother.*

Before leaving England Baron Driesen had made an offer of marriage to Mary Aiken, which was accepted, on the condition that the marriage was to be postponed for two years, during which he went to Russia; but at the stipulated time he returned with his father to claim his bride. After ten years of most happy married life, she having gone from St. Petersburg to Revel with her husband and children to be refreshed by the breezes of the Baltic during the summer, died immediately after the birth of a daughter—her sixth child, in the prime of life, and was ever deeply lamented by her devoted husband.*

* See Appendix, Note 2.

MISS GRACE AIKEN, the only daughter of Robert Aiken, was born 12th January, 1777, and died 22nd October, 1857. Soon after her death a brief memoir appeared in the *Ayr Observer* from the pen of the editor or some one in the town or county where she was so well known, from which I take the following extracts:—

"To his very extensive circle of acquaintances and "friends Mr. Aiken freely introduced Burns and his "works, and Mr. Gilbert Burns attributed very much "of the early and rapid appreciation shown by the "public for his brother's genius to the facilities of being "known which that gentleman afforded." "To his "daughter, not only the kind and benevolent nature of "her father, appears to have descended, but also his "esteem for the poet, for whose memory to the close of "her long and useful though unobtrusively virtuous "career, she cherished feelings of unaffected regard.— "Acquainted as she was with all the most eminent "characters in the West of Scotland for a period ex- "tending over fully two generations, it is in connection "with the memory of our national Poet that her own "memory will perhaps longest survive." The writer then refers to her having delighted Burns by singing his own songs with fine, melodious voice in her father's house; to her meeting him, as already mentioned, in Dumfries when she gave him an invitation to dine with her aunt, Mrs. Copland, who with her friends were members "of the best society in Dumfries."

"And those who remember the charm which "pervaded her address and manner to the very last, "will not wonder that when animated by the recol- "lection of the thousand little attentions she had re- "ceived in her father's house and from her father's friend, "at his hand whose mind entered with all the simplicity "of the truly great into the feelings of the young, "and could, notwithstanding his manly independence "and conscious strength, be with children a very child "himself, it became quite irresistible. Not content,

"as too many are, with merely giving money, although "her considerable income was fully taxed to bear out "the demands of a liberality that never tired, it was in "her personal offices of kindness to the sick, the un- "fortunate, and the young and aged poor, that the "principal charm of all her generosity lay. Amongst "many other schemes of benevolence with which she "charged herself (and indeed there was not a charity in "Ayr which did not receive her warm support) within a "very few years of her decease, she established, sup- "ported, and actively presided over a female school, "whose pupils it was her delight to use her influence "with acquaintances and friends to settle in situations, "as domestics or otherwise, where they might virtu- "ously practise the instructions they had received. To "many a poor girl she was thus an earthly providence; "and all the merciful acts she did will never be fully "told till that Great Day of Acknowledgment and "Award when to have done it 'to the *very least*' will "be the noblest guerdon bestowed by Him, to whom "are as dear as Himself Earth's friendless and forlorn. "All her days devotedly attached to the church "established—the church of her baptism and her "youth—her piety was as free from sectarianism as "from show; her life in the truest of all senses, was "religion, and her end was peace."

She had a life-long, intimate friendship with a widow lady, Mrs. Mair, (née Hunter) whose two sons died early or abroad. After Mr. Aiken's death the two ladies built houses next door to each other, and after her mother's death they parted with them and lived under the same roof, and as in other things, they were also associated in good works. Mrs. Mair did not long survive her beloved friend, and when I went to Ayr to attend my aunt's funeral she gave to me, as had been agreed between them, a handsome service of plate for the breakfast table having this inscription: "Presented to "Mrs. Mair and Miss Aiken by the *first* female friendly "society of Ayr, instituted by them in 1800, in testimony

"of the society's gratitude for their faithful management "of its funds and affairs during the period of twenty "years, May, 1826."

Her benevolence had its pure and abiding source in a well-balanced, well-cultivated and devout mind, of strong affections, good sense, deep and generous sympathy, superior ability and active administrative power. It began at home in loving, dutiful obedience to her parents, and as they advanced in years, the management of household and other affairs devolved upon her; and in every particular she acted with superior skill, courtesy and kindness. She had more than one offer of marriage, but none that induced her to resign the duties of her happy home. Her second brother John commanded his own ship in the East India trade, and he and one of his cousins, who had a similar occupation, were captured with their ships in time of war by the enemy's cruisers and carried into the Isle of France. He began life again as an Indigo planter but never returned to his native land, and although his sister always corresponded with him, letters from India were then few and far between. An answer to a letter might be looked for in nine or ten months from its date. Her sisterly love, therefore, chiefly but not entirely, found its object in my father and his family. His three sons were under her care while at Ayr academy, and in their mother's absence, her affection, her beautiful and wise direction and example were to us invaluable, and through life we enjoyed her constant love and friendship. In illness her presence was cheering as a sunbeam. Her sympathy, tact, tenderness, ability and benevolence made her the confidant, adviser, friend and helper of many beyond the home circle, among relations and friends, high and low, rich and poor. Thus she was often to be found a "ministering angel" in the house of mourning, supporting and soothing the dying, and the afflicted mourners in their agony of grief. Two such cases among others occurred in my youth.—Mrs. Campbell, wife of Major Campbell,

who having quarrelled with a brother officer in Ireland, fought a fatal duel with him in a room without seconds. The jury found a verdict of wilful murder against Campbell, who was executed. The other instance was a young widow whose husband committed suicide, leaving her to take care of several children and provide for the management of a fine estate. To both these ladies my aunt was a steadfast and most valuable friend, adviser and comforter in their difficulties and sorrow. An early and constant friend of hers, of warm affections, but also of hot temper, who married a nobleman, was for a time at variance with her own family, to whom she was happily reconciled chiefly by the judicious mediation of Grace Aiken as a peacemaker; and I have reason to believe that there were other such occasions in which her friendly offices were attended with the same happy result.

Mr. John Ballantine, banker, in Ayr, was Provost or Chief-Magistrate at the time the new bridge was built, and Burns dedicated the poem of "The Twa Brigs" to his kind patron, who was a highly honorable and much-respected gentleman. His estate at Castle Hill was near Ayr, and the house was visible for miles around. He was a friend of my grandfather and his family, whom I often met when a boy, both in Ayr and at his own fine mansion. Having no child, the house and estate, after the death of his widow, were inherited by his nephew James Ballantine, an advocate, a contemporary and a friend of mine, who lived with his mother and sisters before he succeeded to Castle Hill. One summer they had a charming residence near Hawthornden and Roslin Castle, and I had the great enjoyment of spending two or three weeks with them in that classic and beautiful valley, when the woods began to show the tints of autumn. John Ballantine's unmarried sister had a good house in Wellington Square, Ayr. One fine Sunday morning when unavoidably detained at home, as she sat reading at her open window, after the church bells had ceased and there were no sounds of labour, but only the murmur of the waves as they rippled to

the sandy shore, the good lady was disturbed by the loud talk of some young men of the working class planning how they were to spend the sacred day in amusement. Miss Ballantine surprised them by an exhortation to go to church or chapel, and warned them that the neglect to do so led to the breach of other commandments besides the fourth. Having heard her address, the spokesman of the party replied in a loud voice by a quotation from the general assembly's catechism, "No mere man since the fall hath ever kept the commandments." And after that rejoinder they walked off to their amusement.

In the poem of "The Twa Brigs" is this line:—

"A female form came from the towers of Stair."

And in the "Epistle to Davie" are these verses:—

There's a' the pleasures o' the heart,
The lover and the frien;
Ye have your Meg, your dearest part,
And I my darling Jean."

The Meg of whom David Sillar was enamoured had charge of the children of Mrs. Stewart, of Stair, the wife of General Stewart. Sillar's suit was unsuccessful; but during the courtship Burns went with him to Stair and there meeting some Ayrshire lasses who could sing Scotch songs, he gave them some of his own to practise. They were shown to Mrs. Stewart who at once discerned their merit, and she was the first lady who patronized him. After her husband's death she removed to her own paternal property of Afton Lodge, near New Cumnock, and not far from Stair and the river Ayr, on which Stair is situated. It is believed that the verses on Afton water were intended for that lady; and Mrs. Fergusson, of Craigdarroch's lamentation on the death of her son, was also sent to Mrs. Stewart, whose only son, Alexander Gordon Stewart, died about the same time at a military academy at Strasburg.

In August, 1786, Burns wrote to Mrs. Stewart:—
"One feature of your character I shall ever with great
"pleasure remember, the reception I got when I had
"the honour of waiting on you at Stair. I am little
"acquainted with politeness, but I know a good deal
"of benevolence of temper, and goodness of heart.
"Surely did those in exalted stations know how happy
"they could make some classes of their inferiors by
"condescension and amiability; they would never stand
"so high, measuring out with every look the height of
"their elevation, but condescend as sweetly as did Mrs.
"Stewart of Stair."

About twenty-three years after this letter was written I first had the happiness of becoming acquainted with that kind and charming lady, then living at Afton Lodge with her daughters Grace and Anne, and her grandson William Cunninghame, younger, of Enterkine and Anbank, now William Allason Cunninghame, Esq., of Logan House. My younger brother and myself with our grandmother and aunt were invited for a long visit during our autumn holiday. It was followed by other holiday visits when it was not previously arranged that we were to be at Doonholm. The kindness and hospitality of Mrs. Stewart and her daughters, and the enjoyment of the country both at Afton Lodge and at Enterkine and in the neighbourhood, made those seasons pleasant and ever welcome.

When Mr. Cunninghame succeeded to his estate, he gave a *fete champetre*, celebrated by Burns. Several years after the death of his first wife, who was the daughter of Mrs. Stewart, he married Miss Grace Maxwell, youngest daughter of Sir David Maxwell, of Cardoness, baronet, whose brother, Colonel Maxwell, married my grand-aunt. Having lived with her in Edinburgh during her widowhood for twelve years, I thus became well acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Cunninghame, visited them repeatedly at Enterkine, and although he was many years older I remember our intercourse with much pleasure. For he was truly kind, and had the courtesy

and refinement of a gentleman of the old school, with some amiable eccentricities, reminding one occasionally of Addison's Sir Roger de Coverley. He showed me a shelf, in his library, of old family and other bibles, with great veneration and not without tears. He liked discussion and argument; was a good scholar, and especially fond of Greek. One day at the house of a gentleman, in Ayr, who lived near the sea, when conversing with one of his daughters, he grew animated in praise of Greek, and after repeating several times with emphasis the last words of a well-known line in the beginning of Homer's Iliad, which may be freely translated by words in Burns' Vision, "The sounding shore" and "dashing roar of the sea;" Mr. Cunninghame told his charming fair friend that the Greek words so resembled in sound the thing described by them that he was sure she could tell their meaning and urged her to try.

Πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης.
(poluphloisboio thalassés)

"Well, if you will insist upon it, Mr. Cunninghame, I "suppose it means

"Apollo is the boy for the lasses."

An original rendering of Greek into English, by the ear, which immensely delighted Mr. Cunninghame.

William Campbell, Esq., of Fairfield, Sheriff Clerk of Ayrshire, was a patron of Burns, and represented the masonic lodge of which he was a member at the opening of the New Bridge of Ayr, on the 22nd of November, 1786. Fairfield is in the parish of Monkton, near Ayr, in a beautiful country commanding very extensive views of the Firth of Clyde and the Island of Arran, with its grand peaks. It was sold to a Captain Dunlop, of the East India Company's Mercantile Marine Service. Mr. Campbell afterwards built Fairfield Lodge, a villa near Ayr and the Firth of Clyde, where he resided with

a numerous family of handsome sons and daughters. In 1829 the eldest son, William Gunning Campbell, repurchased the estate. In 1814 he married Diana, third daughter of Sir John Ingilby, Baronet. Their son, William Ingilby Campbell, was a Lieutenant in the Sixth Dragoon Guards, and when sailing from Newcastle to Edinburgh with his mother in the Ardencapel steamboat, while talking and laughing together, he leaned against the door for admitting passengers, which was imperfectly fastened, fell backwards into the sea and was drowned. He was her only child. The sad event is recorded on a tomb in the grounds of Fairfield where she and her husband are buried.

Mr. Campbell married again in 1845 and died in 1857, leaving a widow from whom my friend, Lord Cowan, took a lease for several years of the house and pleasure grounds, where with my youngest daughter and eldest grandson, I had the happiness to be his guest for several days in the summer of 1869.

On the 25th January, 1820, the first stone of the monument, erected by public subscription, on the banks of the Doon in honour of the genius of Burns, was laid by the late Sir Alexander Boswell, of Auchinleck, baronet, a chief promoter of it, attended by all the masonic lodges in Ayrshire, and in presence of a multitude of spectators.

In 1821, while on a visit at Enterkine, I went with one of the family to call at Auchinleck and passed several hours there most agreeably in seeing the picturesque scenery and in the extensive library, where Sir Alexander kindly showed us some of the valuable and famous manuscripts. I had often seen him in Edinburgh and Ayrshire. He was tall, athletic, energetic, very lively and agreeable; a keen politician at a time when there was an excess of political zeal and party spirit; and unhappily he had the power and the inclination to use his pen satirically against those from whom he differed. He was in Parliament for a short time, and Lord Cockburn, in his memorials of his time, states that "it was he who took charge of and carried

"the Act which abolished our two old statutes against "fighting a duel or sending a challenge," by which merely to fight was a capital offence.

An anonymous lampoon in the *Glasgow Sentinel*, in which the word coward was most improperly applied to Mr. James Stuart, younger, of Dunearn, Writer to the Signet, which Sir Alexander refused to withdraw or to apologise for, led to a hostile meeting in Fifeshire in March, 1822, the Earl of Rosslyn being Stuart's second, and Mr. Douglas the second of Sir A. Boswell, who was an expert shot. But conscious that he had done wrong, although he would not confess it, he fired in the air. The ball of Stuart, who was unaccustomed to firearms, took effect. Stuart said he was thunderstruck when he saw his adversary sinking. Sir Alexander was carried off on a door and died within two days. Deep sympathy was felt for Lady Boswell, and much regret that the life of her husband should have been so sacrificed. Stuart was tried for murder on the 10th of June, 1822. Having passed advocate that year I was present during the trial. Cockburn and Jeffrey were two of the counsel for Stuart and the public interest was intense. Both in their several styles spoke with consummate eloquence; Cockburn calm, closely logical, temperate, judicious, and with the utmost tact, delicacy, good taste, and good feeling, placed the history of the case before the court and jury; and Jeffrey with equal ability reviewed the evidence and brought forward the opinions of Lord Kames and others, and the verdicts of juries to make it appear that to kill in a fair duel was "killing, no murder." The evidence proved the fairness of the duel, and the absence of all malice on the part of Stuart, who was most willing to be reconciled and deeply mourned the fatal issue. In short, he fought and killed in obedience, it was said, to a great "moral necessity," and after the temperate charge of the Lord Justice Clerk, tending to the same lenient construction of the law as modified by practice, the jury immediately returned a verdict of acquittal and Stuart was liberated; but not to live in tranquillity and peace. He had been seen to

weep for the aggressor, his widow, and children. I saw him passing frequently afterwards, looking sadly remorseful and melancholy, and after a time I saw him no more. I heard that he had gone abroad.

Lord Cockburn wrote some years afterwards "to try "was quite right; and duelling was then, as now, an "absurd and shocking remedy for private insult." It is very instructive to mark to what a pernicious extent the tyranny of custom or fashion may influence the judgments of men, as to what is right or wrong. Drunkenness, swearing, profligacy, were at that time regarded as offences so venial that to allege that a man did such things was no transgression of the laws of honour for which the accused need be called to account. Say that he lied, the insult must be avenged with blood, *except* it were to deceive and betray a woman, who had unhappily believed his false professions of love, and hypocritical delusive promises of marriage. Some would even boast of their success in that kind of fraud and falsehood, and glory in their shame.

Juster views of life, character, and conduct, were beginning to prevail, especially among the rising generation, who had not submitted to the yoke of that code of honour, and who appealed from it to the higher standard of duty to be found in the pure precepts and perfect example of our Lord and Saviour and his apostles. The Sermon on the Mount, several of the parables and the Apostolic epistles were all against duelling and the plausible sophistry by which it was attempted to justify it. Many of my friends and acquaintances holding such views had them confirmed by the trial of Mr. Stuart. We had to ask ourselves the question, if placed in similar circumstances, how would it be our duty to act. The christian duties of restraining the tongue from evil speaking, not provoking to anger, confessing a wrong done, whether designed or unintentional, forgiveness of injuries, christian love or charity with its beautiful characteristics as explained by St. Paul showed plainly that duelling could not be justified on christian principles, and to act in direct opposition

to them in such a case was to be "to man a coward but a brave to God."

In the 59th Session of the Speculative Society, chiefly consisting of students of the University and Advocates, the second question debated is recorded as follows. "November 28, 1822. Is duelling justifiable?" was opened by Mr. David Maitland, and the votes were three for the proposition and eleven against it.

In the next session, on the 27th of January, Mr. Fergusson (afterwards Sir Charles Fergusson, baronet), of Kilkerran, and I agreed to bring forward the question as follows:—"Is duelling justifiable in any case?" He opened for the proposition and I replied against it. The hall was unusually full, several of the old members attending, and the debate had reality and animation from our impressions of the recent duel. It was prolonged to a late hour, and of those who remained to vote, seven were for and nine against duelling in any case. As the latter spoke their real sentiments they for the most part resolved to act accordingly and to support each other in that resolution. Many years afterwards I joined an Anti-duelling Society, including a number of military men of proved courage and others of the highest character, who simply signed a declaration to the same effect, or authorised their signatures to be attached to the document in London.

Now that the vicious custom has been practically abolished we know from experience how futile were the arguments by which it was defended. It was said to be essential to the polish and refinement of social life; that it was necessary to prevent gentlemen from assassinating one another, and to preserve and perpetuate the courage of the officers of our army and navy. "An argument which no British jury could resist."

The duel between the Duke of Wellington and the Earl of Winchelsea on the 21st of March, 1829, when our greatest general "the hero of a hundred fights," whose precious life had been preserved in so many and great dangers, was placed in jeopardy, not to prove his courage, or honour, or patriotism, which were undoubted,

but in compliance with a foolish and barbarous custom could not fail to shock public feeling and to discourage duelling. And that feeling was still farther outraged when Lieutenant Munro, of the Blues, having had a dispute with his brother-in-law, Colonel Fawcett, of the 5th Foot, sent him a challenge next morning, and they fought on the 1st of July, 1843, when Munro mortally wounded his brother-in-law, who died on the 3rd of the month. The coroner's inquest brought in a verdict of "Wilful murder" against Munro and the seconds. He absconded, and the seconds on trial were found "not guilty" by the jury. But that hateful duel led to a very beneficial alteration in the Articles of War and Queen's regulations for the army, which with perplexing inconsistency formerly placed officers in the army in the dilemma of being subject to trial by court martial for *fighting* a duel, and also for not taking steps for the vindication of their character, meaning by that, sending a challenge to single combat.

Since duelling ceased, and all social wrongs are dealt with by the proper tribunals, practised duellists and bullies have found their proper level. The superstitious regard which it was customary to pay to such pistol valour has been laid like a ghost. For the law and police courts deal far better with the insults, libels, immoralities, and misdemeanours of such quarrelsome men than was possible by duelling; by which the guilty person might escape by shooting the man he had wronged. Courage is of various kinds and degrees, in some physical, in others chiefly moral; but that sort of courage was the least and the lowest. What is true and useful courage in one man, would be rash presumptuous folly in another; for knowledge, ability, education and habit are needed in order to acquire the cool commanding courage and self possession of a general, a prime minister, an admiral or captain in the navy, or the hardihood and skill of a sailor, who can reef topsails in a gale, or of a jockey or huntsman who can ride a high-mettled horse. Any tremulous fool could stand to be the target of a braggadocio.

Yet such folly was for many a day made a test of virtue; without which civilization, private and public honour, bravery and worth would expire, and brutality and barbarism overspread the land! To avert such a catastrophe was "a great moral necessity," and "an act of self defence," as justifiable as to shoot a murderer or an assassin attempting to kill you, your wife, or your child! To despise groundless calumny or vulgar insolence, to forgive, to explain, to apologize, to seek legal redress, was pusillanimity unbecoming a gentleman, for which, however good, wise and brave, he must be "sent to Coventry," and to avoid "Coventry" many rushed into crime involving suicide and murder,—the French at all events would say "under extenuating circumstances."

Some of the distinguished men who had welcomed Burns in Edinburgh* survived when I went there at an early age, from Ayr academy. Dugald Stewart retired from his professorship of moral philosophy in 1810. Him I never saw, but in 1869 I visited an old friend Mr. Arthur Campbell, who then possessed and lived at Catrine, the residence of the professor in the lifetime of Burns. The Ayr there takes its course through a channel of grand red rocks, fine foliage overhanging its pebbled shore; the woods of Ballochmyle being on the opposite bank and the scenery that where Burns and Mary Campbell roved and pledged their vows of love across the crystal tributary brook.

The immediate successor of Dugald Stewart, was the acute and profound metaphysician, Dr. Thomas Brown, whose class I attended in the winter of 1820, when after giving the thirty-fifth of his published lectures, failing health obliged him to desist, and to commit his manuscript lectures to Doctor Welsh, to be read to the class. That lecture was one of those which he was accustomed to deliver with much feeling, especially this quotation from Beattie's Hermit:—

Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn
Kind nature the embryo blossom will save,

* See Appendix, Note 4.

But when shall spring visit the mouldering urn,
O' when shall it dawn on the night of the grave?

These lines seemed prophetic, for he never revisited the university, of which and of the society of Edinburgh he was so bright an ornament. His much regretted death took place at the country house of a friend, on the second of April, 1820. His great ability and thorough knowledge of his subject, aided by the eloquence and good taste, and fine feeling with which he adorned and made attractive his acute disquisitions and learned discourses on moral science made him a favourite with the students, and his character and manner were such as to win their attachment and inspire respect. In the following session he was succeeded by Professor Wilson the poet, the eloquent and able writer in Blackwood's Magazine, whose inaugural lecture I had the pleasure to hear.

Dr. Welsh, the Professor of Church History, in the memoir prefixed to the published lectures of Dr. Brown, writes. "Of almost universal knowledge, "acquired by the most extensive reading and by "wide intercourse with the world, there was no topic "of conversation to which he seemed a stranger; and "such was his comprehensiveness and readiness of "intellect, that he threw new light on subjects that "might have appeared most foreign to his habit of "thinking. * * * In the philosopher's "love of truth, and in the patient investigation of it, "Dr. Brown may be pronounced as at least equal, and "in subtlety of intellect and powers of analysis, as "superior to any metaphysician that ever existed. The "predominating quality in his intellectual character "was unquestionably his power of analysing; the "most necessary of all qualities to a metaphysician." He had an exquisite taste for poetry and love of it, as his lectures prove; and was an artist himself in that way. But the mental processes which are essential to a first-rate metaphysician are not favourable to the composition of good poetry.

Dr. Brown and his sisters were several times at Mrs. Maxwell's, while I lived at her house, No. 72, Queen Street, which although inconveniently far from the University, (where there was no hall in which students living at a distance, might pass an hour or two between the classes,) was charmingly situated at the West End of the street, which was then the favourite evening promenade; opposite was Lord Moray's park of Drumsheugh with unobstructed views of Corstorphine hill, and of the Firth of Forth, and the Scottish highlands. Lord Napier's house was number 71. The Earl of Wemyss had the largest house in that division of Queen Street, and Professors Hope and Leslie also resided there. Mr. Archibald Fletcher, advocate, and his beautiful, excellent and accomplished wife lived in North Castle Street, the corner house of which, next George Street, is famous as the residence of Sir Walter Scott, who published Waverley in 1814, which caused much curious speculation and erroneous conjecture as to the "Great Unknown" at first. But in course of years circumstantial evidence pointed from many quarters and for various reasons to the true author. Jeffrey, the Edinburgh reviewer, had then a house, No. 92, George Street, his prospects at the bar after long delay having improved. It was a privilege to be in Edinburgh at that time, and good for young men to meet occasionally in private and in public those great literary celebrities, some of whom might be seen almost every day in the streets, in the Parliament House, and at the University. Perhaps the influence was quite as beneficial in future life as it was when their immediate presence, if it quickened the desire of excellence, produced desponding feelings of hopeless inferiority.

The Chemistry class at the University was the most numerously attended, for Professor Hope made it generally attractive as well as instructive, by his expertness in the laboratory. In performing his beautiful experiments he was almost faultless. I attended his class in 1819-20. At that time to procure a light, sparks were struck from a flint by

steel into a clumsy box of tinder until they could be blown into flame sufficient to light paper. It is curious to remember the Professor one day mentioning to his class of about five hundred, a new and beautiful invention. And when he touched a piece of sand paper with a lucifer match, the admiring and applauding audience were delighted.

Professor, afterwards Sir John Leslie, had higher scientific attainments and greater genius; and was famed for his investigations and discoveries in Light and Heat. After being two years in his small Mathematical class, I followed him on his promotion to his class of Natural Philosophy, when he was appointed successor to the highly esteemed and much lamented John Playfair, a few of whose lectures I had attended as a visitor only. Leslie had some rather odd peculiarities. He dyed his hair, but the hue was purple and not a fast colour His lecture hall was lighted from the roof, and the shutters were opened and closed with cords from the lecturer's platform. One day he was to show us some of the wonders of electricity, which was to be made to pass through water, contained in a large and lofty glass vessel placed on the long table near the Professor. The hall was darkened and we sat in solemn attentive silence to watch the event. There was a bright flash of lightning, a loud crash and a heavy shower. His assistant quickly let in the day, looking towards the class with a roguish smile of suppressed laughter. Had the Professor been hurt by his awkward attempt to wield the thunderbolt our eager sympathy and kind feelings would have been strongly excited in his behalf with ready help. But there he stood fresh from an unexpected bath, plump, blooming and corpulent, wet and woe-begone, with some purple dye on his cheeks, contemplating the fragments of his vase, and his flooded table. He had only taken a false step from the sublime to the ridiculous, and to resist the impulse to laughter would have required more natural and moral philosophy than we possessed.

A happy joke from the Professor would have been a great relief to our naughtiness. In future sessions, doubtless his lectures would be better arranged, and his experiments performed more skilfully. He was a very able man and good teacher, kind and encouraging to his pupils, and became personally acquainted with some of us by invitations to breakfast with him, by which we felt highly honoured and gratified.

Henry Mackenzie who first reviewed the works of Burns in the Lounger, and that favourably, was a public character in Edinburgh till near his death in 1831.

"His excellent conversation," wrote Lord Cockburn, "'in Memorials of his Time' agreeable family, good "evening parties, and the interest attached to united "age and reputation made his house one of the "pleasantest. * * * The title of the "'Man of Feeling' adhered to him ever after the "publication of that novel; and it was a good example "of the difference there sometimes is between a man "and his work. Strangers used to fancy that he must "be a pensive sentimental Harley; whereas he was far "better, a hard headed practical man, as full of worldly "wisdom as most of his fictitious characters are devoid "of it; and this without in the least impairing the "affectionate softness of his heart. In person, he "was thin, shrivelled and yellow, kiln dried, with "something when seen in profile, of the clever wicked "look of Voltaire."

One of the ablest and most learned men in Edinburgh and in Ayrshire was referred to by Burns in the Kirkcudbright election ballads, as "Barskimming's gude Knight." He was Sir William Miller, Baronet, a Judge in the Court of Session, whose judicial title of Lord Glenlee, was taken from the name of his estate. His residence was Barskimming on the river Ayr, where it has formed in the course of ages a deep channel through rocks of old or new red sandstone. This

remarkable man was born three or four years before Burns, and died in 1846, in his ninety-first year. He had travelled on the continent before he went to the bar, where he had little practice, but was soon made a Judge, and by diligent study, which was the habit of his solitary life, he became learned in the law, in classics and in the literature of his own country, of France, Spain, and Italy; to which he added at a late period of his life some knowledge of German. But his favourite pursuit was Mathematics, and in the opinion of Professor Playfair, his original views in that science would have been highly esteemed if he could have been persuaded to publish them. When Jeffrey in 1842 visited Lord Glenlee at his country seat, he, being then in his eighty-seventh year, was busy with a new German treatise on the properties of the ellipse. His legal opinions as a Judge, were given with sententious brevity, and had great weight.

"His appearance," wrote Lord Cockburn in his Life "of Lord Jeffrey, "was striking, and very expressive "of his intellect and habits. The figure was slender, "the countenance pale, with a full dark eye; the "features regular, unless when disturbed, as his whole "frame often was, by frequent jerks and gesticulations, "as if he was under frequent galvanism; his air and "manner polite. Everything indicated the philosophical "and abstracted gentleman. And another thing which "added to his peculiarity was, that he never used an "English word when a Scotch one could be got."

When at the bar with too abundant leisure, I had frequent opportunities of seeing and hearing what Lord Cockburn has so well described.

While on a visit at Enterkine I went to Barskimming, chiefly to see the fine scenery, and when at Mr. Campbell's at Catrine in 1869, went again with some members of his family, to a very agreeable garden party given by the gentleman who then occupied the house as a tenant.

Lord Glenlee from his recluse and studious habits

used to avoid visitors, an awkward consequence of which inclination was related to me by my cousin, the late Rev. John Hunter, D.D., who had the anecdote from good authority.

A gentleman having called on Lord Glenlee, he desired the servant to say that he was not within, and at once proceeded to verify the statement by going out by an open window, from which, without much difficulty he could descend to the turf at the back of the house. Meanwhile his visitor, wishing to look at the grounds before his departure, went round the house, and was surprised to see his lordship carefully getting out backwards, and just as he completed the descent he was confronted by the rejected visitor, having—

"Forestalled his date of grief,
And run to meet that he would most avoid."

The Rev. Archibald Alison, was highly esteemed as an episcopal clergyman, and also as an author and an agreeable member of the best literary society of Edinburgh. His first chapel was in the Canongate not far from Holyrood, in a quarter inhabited by noble families when Scotland was an independent kingdom, but long since forsaken by the gentry for the new town, where a chapel was begun for him at the East end of York Place in 1816. His elegant style of preaching attracted many Presbyterians in addition to his regular congregation, especially when it was expected that his discourse would refer to some subject of more than usual interest. He excelled in sacred elocution; the devout and impressive reading and praying of the services of the Church of England, with correct emphasis and the natural inflections of a pleasing tuneful voice; in complete contrast to the intoning or rather monotoning now in fashion, in so many parish churches, which is a faulty imitation of the proper and well performed choral service of a cathedral. Mr. Alison aided devotion, by bringing

out the beauty and power of the English liturgy, which is too often marred by a monotonous compound of music and speech, with other undesirable accessories.

Mr. Alison was the well known author of the essay on the "Nature and Principles of Taste," which was the subject of much learned discussion, in reviews, lectures, and debating societies.

His theory is fully examined by Dr. Thomas Brown in his lectures, and while he differs from Mr. Alison, he refers to his view of the origin of beauty as having been given, "with much felicity of language and with much happy illustration of example and analysis by my very ingenious and very eloquent friend."

Mr. Alison sent a copy of his book to Burns, who after having read it carefully and made some notes and strictures on it, wrote to the author from Ellisland, on the 14th February, 1791.

"I own, sir, that at the first glance several of your "propositions startled me as paradoxical. That the "martial clangour of a trumpet had something in it "vastly more grand, heroic, and sublime, than the "twingle-twangle of a Jews harp; that the delicate "flexure of a rose-twig, when the half-blown flower is "heavy with the tears of the dawn, was infinitely more "beautiful and elegant than the upright stub of a "burdock; and that from something innate and inde-"pendent of all associations of ideas. These I had set "down as irrefragable, orthodox truths, until perusing "your book shook my faith. In short, sir, except "Euclid's *Elements of Geometry*, which I made a shift to "unravel by my father's fireside in the winters' evenings of "the first season I held the plough, I never read a book "which gave me such a quantum of information, and "added so much to my stock of ideas, as your *Essays on "the Principles of Taste*. One thing, sir, you must forgive "my mentioning as an uncommon merit in the work.— "I mean the language. 'To clothe abstract philosophy "in elegance of style sounds something like a con-"tradiction in terms.' But you have convinced me "that they are quite compatible. I enclose you some

"poetic bagatelles of my late composition. The one "in print is my first essay in the way of telling a tale.

"I am, Sir, &c.,

"R. B."

It may be safely affirmed, however, that Burns never composed his poetry by analysing the primary and secondary emotions which inspired him. That would have cooled "nature's fire," and his fervent odes and lyrics would not have glowed into being metaphysically.

I shall conclude these Memorials of Burns and his contemporaries, by an extract from a letter of Sir Walter Scott, describing his meeting with the Poet at the late Professor Fergusson's, and his appearance, conversation, and manners. It was published in Lockhart's life of Burns.

"As for Burns, I may truly say, *Virgilium vidi tantum.* "I was a lad of fifteen in 1786-7, when he came first "to Edinburgh, but had sense and feeling enough to be "much interested in his poetry, and would have given "the world to know him; but I had very little acquain- "tance with any literary people, and less with the "gentry of the west country, the two sets that he most "frequented. Mr. Thomas Grierson was at that time a "clerk of my father. He knew Burns, and promised to "ask him to his lodgings to dinner, but had no oppor- "tunity to keep his word, otherwise I might have seen "more of this distinguished man. As it was, I saw him "one day at the late venerable Professor Fergusson's. "There were several gentlemen of literary reputation "among whom I remember the celebrated Mr. Dugald "Stewart. Of course, we youngsters sat silent, looked, "and listened. The only thing I remember which was "remarkable in Burns' manner was the effect produced "upon him by a print of Bunbury's, representing a "soldier lying dead in the snow, his dog sitting in "misery on one side, on the other his widow, with a "child in her arms. These lines were written be- "neath:—

"Cold on Canadian hills or Minden's plain,
"Perhaps that parent wept her soldier slain—
"Bent o'er her babe, her eye dissolved in dew,
"The big drops mingling with the milk he drew
"Gave the sad presage of his future years,
"The child of misery baptised in tears.

"Burns seemed much affected by the print, or, rather, "the ideas which it suggested to his mind. He asked "whose the lines were, and it chanced that nobody but "myself remembered that they occur in a half-forgotten "poem of Langhorne's, called by the unpromising title "of 'The Justice of Peace.' I whispered my infor- "mation to a friend present, who mentioned it to Burns, "who rewarded me with a look and a word, which, "though of mere civility, I then received, and still "recollect with very great pleasure."

"His person was strong and robust, his manners "rustic, not clownish; a sort of dignified plainness and "simplicity which received part of its effect, perhaps, "from one's knowledge of his extraordinary talents. "His features are represented in Mr. Nasmyth's picture, "but to me it conveys the idea that they are diminished "as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance "was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. "I would have taken the poet, had I not known what "he was, for a very sagacious country farmer of the old "Scotch school, *i.e.* none of your modern agriculturists, "who keep labourers for their drudgery, but the *douce* "*gudeman*, who held his own plough. There was a "strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his "lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the "poetical character and temperament. It was large "and of a dark cast, which glowed (I say literally "*glowed*) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I "never saw such another eye in a human head, though I "have seen the most distinguished men of my time. His "conversation expressed perfect self confidence, with- "out the slightest presumption. Among the men who

"were the most learned of their time and country, he "expressed himself with perfect firmness, but without "the least intrusive forwardness; and when he differed in "opinion, he did not hesitate to express it firmly, yet at "the same time with modesty. I do not remember "any part of his conversation distinctly enough to be "quoted, nor did I ever see him again except in the "street, where he did not recognise me, as I could not "expect he should. He was much caressed in Edin-"burgh, but (considering what literary emoluments "have been since his day) the efforts made for his "relief were extremely trifling."

"I remember on this occasion I mention, I thought "Burns' acquaintance with English poetry was rather "limited, and also, that having twenty times the abilities "of Allan Ramsay and Fergusson, he talked of them "with too much humility, as his models; there was, "doubtless, national predilection in his estimate."

"This is all I can tell you about Burns. I have only "to add, that his dress corresponded with his manner. "He was like a farmer dressed in his best to dine with "the Laird. I do not speak in *malam partem* when I "say, I never saw a man in company with his superiors "in station and information, more perfectly free from "either the reality or the affectation of embarrassment. "I was told, but did not observe it, that his address to "females was extremely deferential, and always with a "turn either to the pathetic or humorous, which en-"gaged their attention particularly. I have heard the "late Duchess of Gordon remark this. I do not know "anything I can add to these recollections of forty "years since."

Appendix.

NOTE I.—Liverpool, *p* 126.

ON my next visit to Liverpool after twenty years of absence, the change seemed like that which surprised Rip Van Winkle on awaking from his twenty years' slumber in the Sleepy Hollow. From a flourishing seaport of moderate size it had become a great commercial city, with a railway and docks of vast extent thronged with shipping. Salt water baths from which at high water numerous swimmers used to plunge into the Mersey, had given place to a large landing stage for passengers by steam and sailing vessels. The dreaded schoolmaster was only remembered for his cruel tyranny, the site of his forsaken school and its large playground being covered with streets. Everton, a rural village, resorted to on holidays, and famous for a popular Lancashire confection called "Toffy," was a parish of Liverpool. The city then extended far beyond Rodney Street, towards Edgehill. I was hospitably entertained for a day or two by Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone at their marine residence, they being among the few remaining friends of my father and mother's family. At each succeeding visit to Liverpool it has appeared to spread rapidly like London, which has trebled its population since I saw it illuminated in the summer of 1813, on the arrival of the news of Wellington's victory at the great and decisive battle of Vittoria. It now vies with the metropolis in the number and

size of the fine parks with which public spirit and enterprise have adorned it.

NOTE II.—Borodino, *p* 128.

THE battle of BORODINO of the 7th of September 1812, at which General Baron Driesen was wounded. was the most obstinately disputed and terrible battle recorded in history. The Russians lost one of their best Generals, Bagrathion, two other generals killed, and thirty wounded; fifteen thousand troops killed, thirty thousand wounded, and two thousand prisoners. Of the French, Generals Montbrun, Caulaincourt, and many more were killed, and thirty wounded; their total loss being twelve thousand killed and thirty-eight thousand wounded. The Russians notwithstanding this terrific onslaught, retired towards Moscow in good order and with seventy thousand men undaunted, and under arms. Had they known that the provisions and ammunition of the French were nearly exhausted they might have renewed the fight, with the assurance of victory, but with the sacrifice of many more lives. It was the critical battle of the war, followed by the heroic burning of Moscow, the ancient capital, sacrificed to save the country by the inevitable retreat of the invaders, amid the snows of a Russian winter which completed the overthrow of Napoleon's vast army.

POET LAUREATE'S ODE TO DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH.

On the arrival and hearty welcome in England of the Duke of Edinburgh and his bride the Russian Princess, knowing how much the descriptions given in the newspapers of their reception in England would interest my Russian relations, I sent several extracts relating to it, and also the Bridal Ode of the Poet Laureate, as soon as they appeared. My eldest niece to whom they were sent having been one of the Maids of Honour during her father's lifetime, at the court of

the Emperor Nicolas, when my letter arrived was writing to Her Imperial Majesty, and having hastily read my letter she sent Mr. Tennyson's Ode as my composition!

This brought a letter from the private Secretary of the Empress, to—

THE BARONESS VON KAULBARS

"Gracious Lady Baroness,

I had the pleasure of receiving your honoured letter on the 9th of this month, and of forwarding it to Her Majesty the Empress, and (after replying to her own letter), the Secretary requested her "to take the "trouble of conveying in her Majesty's name to your "dear uncle mentioned in the same letter, P. F. "Aiken, Esq., residing at Bristol, her most gracious "thanks for the memorial by him in a poetical form, "of moments not to be forgotten by the Imperial "family," &c., &c.

(Signed), MAURITZ.

St. Petersburg, 14th March, 1874.

The above date in the old style would be the 26th of March, and when the original German letter was forwarded to me, I was in great consternation at my undeserved elevation to the rank of Poet Laureate, and lost no time in giving honour to Mr. Tennyson, to whom the honour was due, whose beautiful poems with myriads of my countrymen I greatly admired, and from whose wreath I should have been sorry to pluck a single leaf.

I sent therefore the following letter to the Baroness von Kaulbars who forwarded it to Her Majesty the Empress of Russia by whom it was read and acknowledged.

Wallcroft House, Durdham Down,
Bristol, 10th April, 1874.

My dear Alexandrine,

Immediately after the public entry of the Duke of Edinburgh and his Russian bride into London,

I sent to you from a newspaper a description of the reception of the Russian Princess by the inhabitants of our great metropolis, and also a copy of the poem composed for the occasion by Mr. Tennyson, our most celebrated living poet, whose special duty it was to write it, as being Poet Laureate, an officer appointed for the celebration in verse of such happy events. Along with your own congratulations you sent the poem to Her Majesty the Empress of Russia, and said by mistake that I was the author of it. Her Majesty, with kind condescension has transmitted to you, a gracious message through her private secretary, General Mauritz, and to myself also, as the supposed author of the poem, of which however I am unworthy.

But I feel grateful for the intended honour, and am glad that I have been the instrument of bringing before Her Majesty a composition of superior merit, by which she has been pleased and interested. In every beautiful sentiment of that welcome, I can agree more completely than most Englishmen can do; because my sister was the wife of your dear father, and both of them acknowledged as their friend and benefactor, the late Emperor Alexander; and while they lived at Oranienbaum, more especially, had frequent interviews with their Imperial Majesties. Hence my interest in Russia and its Imperial families extends to nearly the beginning of this century, during the whole of which my life has been prolonged. I remember the battle of Borodino in which my brother-in-law, then a General in the Russian army received his wound, and the retreat of the French Emperor Napoleon and his army from Moscow, which checked the ambitious career of the greatest enemy of Russia and of England, and led to his downfall which was completed at Waterloo.

Let us hope that the auspicious alliance of the Royal families of two great and powerful nations, will tend to their closer union and friendship, and to the preservation of the peace and happiness of all other nations.

Your very affectionate uncle.

NOTE III.—Edinburgh, *p* 141.

WHEN Burns wrote his Ode to Edinburgh soon after his arrival, in December, 1786, the North Loch, as it was called, must have extended from the base of the grand old Castle—"grim rising o'er the rugged rock," —to near the North bridge, and but a very small part of the New Town could have been built. Many of the gentry still lived in the old city, in the High Street, with its houses of ten or twelve stories, and even in courts and closes of the Canongate; the better and more agreeable residences being towards the south of that long street which extends from the Castle Hill to Holyrood palace. Twenty-seven years afterwards, at seven o'clock on a cold, dark November morning, I left "Simpson's" noted inn, at the end of the old bridge of Ayr, whence the coach for Glasgow started at that hour. It was heavily laden before we arrived at the place for breakfast, a way-side inn on a bleak moor, where a scanty crop of oats was still in sheaves in a field exposed to the weather. We reached the appointed hotel in Glasgow at two o'clock, and were joined at dinner by an unfortunate traveller who had been an outside passenger about six weeks before. The coach having upset, fell upon his ancle, which was so injured that he was only able to pursue his homeward journey that day. At four we started, and arrived at the west end of Prince's Street about ten at night. My boyish admiration of the long line of lamps, though dimly lighted with train oil, was great, and of the wide and regular streets still greater.

One night a considerable number of those lamps in Leith walk, which connects Edinburgh with its harbour at Leith, were extinguished by a crew of Greenlanders or Finlanders, who after strolling about the city, when returning to their ship, climbed the lamp posts and refreshed themselves with the oily beverage which gave us light before gas was invented. There were watchmen in those days, who carried lanterns and called out the time of night and the state of the weather to

disturb sleepers and warn thieves to get out of the way of that infirm patrol. The North Loch was then a marsh in wet weather. The inhabitants of the old town used to cross it at certain points instead of going round by the North Bridge. I have often heard a story about Hume, the historian and doubting philosopher, whose person was well-known to the washerwomen who dried their clothes on the banks of the lake which was formerly beneath the castle rock. He sank in the marshy ground, and being in what the Americans call a fix, called for help to one of the washerwomen. She came, and it was said, she gave him an earnest and reproachful exhortation to piety from her pulpit on the solid ground before she stretched forth her brawny arms to pull the philosopher out of the mire.

The earthen mound was completed when I first saw it in 1813, but not consolidated so as to be built upon, and there was a wall with occasional openings to afford some shelter in crossing that much frequented thoroughfare.

The New Town of Edinburgh is built on one of the best sites that can be imagined, considering the extent, beauty and grandeur of the views of sea and land—the Calton Hill, the Salisbury Crags, Arthur's seat, the Forth, its noble bay and Islands, the Ochils and the Grampians, the Braid and the Pentland Hills. Those who planned it have certainly avoided the narrow streets of our old cities, and of many foreign towns, but they have also avoided their picturesque variety of form and colour.

The uniformity of Prince's Street was originally a complete contrast to the old town opposite, not less remarkable by night than by day. It was very strikingly brought out at the time of the visit of George the Fourth, in August, 1822, when the candles put in the windows of the lofty tenements in the Old Town inhabited by the working classes were the best part of the illumination.

At that time the New Town mainly consisted of Prince's Street and its extension westward, George Street, Queen Street, and York Place, Heriot Row,

Albemarle Row, and Northumberland Street with the streets that intersect them at right angles; and St. Andrew's and Charlotte Squares at either end of George Street.

Miss Mary Stewart, who lived at that time in Heriot Row with her mother and two of her sisters, being cousins of the Misses Stewart of Afton, was a very skilful sketcher of panoramic and other extensive views with the reed pen. In 1820 and 1822, she made a series of accurate and clever views of Edinburgh and the surrounding country, dedicated by permission to the King. She and her sisters were actively useful and highly respected in Edinburgh, and having first met them in early boyhood at Afton Lodge and very often during my residence in Edinburgh, I had the pleasure of renewing that long acquaintance with Miss Mary Stewart after she married Sir Abraham Elton, Baronet, of Clevedon Court, Somersetshire, when she gave me that series of lithographed sketches which I value highly as a memorial of herself, as a work of art, and an accurate delineation of the Edinburgh of 1822, when it was visited by George the Fourth.

During my last happy visit, in 1873, I saw that 51 years had made great changes for the better in some respects since the royal visit, but not in all. In the three principal streets of the New Town the houses were built originally nearly all of one pattern. The material from the grand inexhaustible quarry of Craigleith was of first-rate quality. But while boon nature with rocks, hills, woods, fields, sea and shores had bestowed endless variety around the New Town the desire for an unnatural uniformity seems to have possessed the architects. Their best excuse was that Napoleon had practically closed the continent against them, and that to carry on the war, our Chancellors of the Exchequers had actually taxed *Light*. The abolition of the window tax was an era in British architecture. The famous attempt of an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer to tax lucifer matches, which made such an outcry, was as nothing to that financial policy which made every

hole in the wall of a cellar liable to duty, and every window beyond a certain size subject to a double tax.

The old leases of houses in the New Town with their restrictions against building shops and hotels must have become inoperative, as always happens in a few generations.

Prince's Street has been greatly improved by its public gardens, Scott's monument, and the buildings on that original deformity the "Earthen Mound," and by numerous hotels, extending far westwards, which have changed for the better the uniform character of the street, which is further enlivened by a railway instead of the quagmire of the old Loch.

In George Street, some houses have been sold for double their original cost, to be changed into shops and large hotels, so that the same transformation is going forward there. But alas for the west end of Queen Street! Moray Place, Ainslie Place, with first class houses in a better style of architecture, cover the site of the once beautiful park, and have shut out the view we so much enjoyed and admired, which is still more effectually done by high buildings and houses on the opposite side of Queen Street. A house where Sir Patrick Murray of Ochtertyre, and his family used to live was made a shop—and another shop for the sale of some kind of provisions was within a door or two of the house of the Earl of Wemyss.

The houses of the New Town were formerly supplied by water from a large reservoir on the Castle Hill, by gravitation, for which purpose each house was provided with a *leaden* cistern in the area. Those leaden cisterns and the use of new bread whitened by the bakers with alum, were found during my residence in Edinburgh to be so injurious to health, that it is to be hoped both have been discontinued.

NOTE 4.—Early Kings of Norway, *p.* 127

The derivation and meaning of my grandfather's name was always a puzzle to me, until my valued friend

John Beddoe, M.D., F.R.S., &c., who is not only eminent in his noble profession but skilled in other kinds of lore relating to the human race, told me that it had a Norwegian origin. His reasons for that opinion are stated in the following note.

Clifton 15th October, 1875.

My Dear Mr. Aiken,

There is no doubt that the surname of Aiken comes from the Scandinavian forename (or latterly christian name) Hakon or Haco, which was borne by numerous distinguished warriors of the north, e. g. by Hacon Jarl (Earl Haco), the ruler of Norway previous to King Olaf, sometimes called by the christians Hakon the bad, also by one or more Earls of Orkney, and by the noble but unfortunate King Hakon of Norway and the Isles, who fought the battle of Largs, against the Scotch King Alexander about the year 1260. Kyle Akin in Skye is named, I believe from this last Haco (or Hakon or Aikin) and means the ferry or passage or strait of Hakon who sailed through it. I believe that the Scottish names of Aitken and Aitchison, and the north English ones of Atkins and Atkinson have all the same derivation, but in the case of some of these there may be some doubt.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN BEDDOE,

P.S. Hakon, Earl of Orkney, is reputed to lie under a large barrow or tumulus on the shore of the little lake of Stennis, near to Stromness. The name Hakon was borne by several other Norsemen of mark in history.

The subject here referred to by Dr. Beddoe, so far exceeds in interest, the derivation of a few names, that I am the more obliged to him for his kind letter. The hardy Norsemen were not the least remarkable and heroic of the various races from whom the inhabitants of the British Isles are descended. Svein, King of

Norway, was also King of Denmark and of England. Mr. Carlyle has lately published what he calls Rough Notes of the early Kings of Norway, chiefly derived from Snorro-Sturleson's history of them, and aided by the German Professor Dahlmann's Geschichte von Dannemark; and doubtless the Heimskringla or Chronicle of Norwegian Kings, which Mr. Laing has translated.

What little our English historians have written concerning them is chiefly under the name of Danish invaders of our island, when it was in a state of misrule, weakness, disorder, turbulence and crime; therefore a few notices of these Olafs and Hakons of the olden time will be a pardonable and not unpleasing digression as the last note in this appendix, which may be passed over by all who are not interested in the subject

Harald, the fairhaired, who died at the age of eighty-three, first united several petty Sovereignties or Jarls into one kingdom of Norway, under his own dominion, about the year 933 of the christian era. He had a son named Hakon, who was sent to England, was adopted by our King Athelstan, baptised and carefully educated. "A very shining youth" says Mr. Carlyle, "as Athelstan saw with just pleasure." So soon as the few preliminary preparations had been settled, Hakon, furnished with a ship or two by Athelstan, suddenly appeared in Norway; got acknowledged by the Peasant Thing (little Parliament) in Trondhjem; the news of which flew over Norway like fire through dead grass, says an old chronicler. The youth of fifteen proved "a brilliant "and successful King; regulated many things, public "law among others, and on the whole gained for him-"self the name of Hakon the Good."

He had two great evils to contend against, invading Danes and heathen idolatry in Norway To extirpate that and to establish the christian religion was the chief object of his reign, and in spite of opposition from the idolaters he did "thoroughly shake asunder the old "edifice of heathendom and fairly introduce some

"foundation for a new and better rule of faith and life "among his people."—*Carlyle.*

He bravely repulsed repeated invasions of the Danes. But about the sixteenth year of his pious, valiant and worthy reign, while at a feast with many guests on the Island of Stord, he was surprised by the sudden arrival of a Danish fleet, from which a multitude, afterwards computed as six to one, sprang on shore. But the heroic King and his brave band, fresh from their feast and valiant for the fray, disdained flight to their own ships and gave battle, the King fighting with accustomed valour, as Snorro said, conspicuous with bright gilded helmet, a mark for his enemies. Eyvind Finnson, the Skaldaspillir (annihilator of all other Skalds or Poets,) who wrote a famous Hakon's song, put a hat over his helmet. Skreya and Alf, two Danish champions came boasting to attack the king at whom Skreya swinging his sword made a cut, but Thorald the strong, an Icelander, parried the blow by dashing his shield against Skreya, whom the King with his two-handed sword cleft through helm and head, while Thorald slew Alf. The death of their champions so disheartened the Danes that they wavered and fled to their ships, pursued by the King and his brave band with much slaughter. But this grand fight and victory proved fatal to him, for he received a wound from an arrow under the arm-pit. He was assisted to his ship and had to stop at Hella, the flat-rock, still called Hakon's Hella, faint from bleeding. And there died Hakon the good, like Nelson the brave, in the hour of his greatest victory, and as Snorro said, "lamented both by friends and enemies; "and they said that never again would Norway see "such a king."

Olaf Tryggevesen was king of Norway about the year 995—1000. Educated in Russia, he left it "for the one "profession open to him, that of sea robbery; and did "feats without number in that questionable line in "many seas and scenes, in England latterly and most "conspicuously of all." At the Scilly Islands he had

much discourse with a venerable hermit, and after serious reflection was baptised, "but did not quit his "Viking profession, indeed what other was there for "him in the world as yet."—*Carlyle.*

He and Svein, King of Denmark, together invaded England, in 994, sailing up the Thames to attack London, but unable to pass the bridge and failing there, they plundered Kent, Hampshire and Sussex, and were bought off by the feeble, timorous Ethelred the Unready, with £16,000. By Elphegus, Bishop of Winchester, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, Olaf was more fully instructed in the truths of the christian religion, and was baptised anew at Andover in the King's presence. Olaf made a promise to the Bishop which he kept faithfully, that he never would plunder again in England. A Dowager English or Irish Princess fell in love with him; they were married, and lived in England or in Dublin for two or three years.

From first to last his was a life of wild and strange adventure. The fierce and ambitious Gunhild, widow of King Eric, had murdered his father and compelled his mother, Astrid, to fly through forests until she reached her father's, where she lay concealed with her infant boy. Then she fled to Sweden, and then to Esthonia, where she was sold as a slave and was separated from her child, who was also sold. A relation, high in the Russian service, recognised him, obtained his freedom, and gave him help to use it with wonderful energy and success.

The Poet Longfellow in his Saga of King Olaf gives a spirited description of his return to Norway.

To avenge his father slain,
And re-conquer realm and reign,
Came the youthful Olaf home;
Through the midnight sailing, sailing
Listening to the wind's wild wailing
And the dashing of the foam.

To his thoughts the sacred name
Of his mother Astrid came,
And the tale she oft had told
Of her flight by secret passes,
Through the mountains and morasses,
To the house of Hakon old.

The strange memories crowded back,
Of Queen Gunhild's wrath and wrack,
And a hurried fight by sea;
Of grim vikings and their rapture
In the sea-fight and the capture,
And the life of slavery.

How a stranger watched his face
In the Esthonian market-place;
Scanned his features one by one,
Saying "We should know each other;
I am Sigurd, Astrid's brother,
Thou art Olaf, Astrid's son."

Then as Queen Allogia's page,
Old in honours, young in age,
Chief of all her men-at-arms;
Till vague whispers and mysterious,
Reached King Valdemar, the imperious,
Filling him with strange alarms.

Then his cruisings o'er the seas,
Westward to the Hebrides,
And to Scilly's rocky shore;
And the hermit's cavern dismal,
Christ's great name and rites baptismal,
In the ocean's rush and roar.

All these thoughts of love and strife
Glimmered through his lurid life,
As the star's intenser light
Through the red flames o'er him trailing,
As his ships went sailing, sailing,
Northward in the summer night.

Trained for either camp or court,
Skilful in each manly sport,
Young, and beautiful, and tall;
Art of warfare, craft of chases,
Swimming, skating, snow-shoe races,
Excellent alike in all.

When at sea with all his rowers,
He along the bending oars
Outside of his ship could run.
He the Smalsor Horn ascended,
And his shining shield suspended
On its summit like a sun.

On the ship-rails he could stand,
Wield his sword with either hand,
And at once two javelins throw;
At all feasts where ale was strongest.
Sat the merry monarch longest,
First to come and last to go.

Norway never yet had seen
One so beautiful of mien,
One so royal in attire;
When in arms completely furnished,
Harness gold, inlaid, and burnished;
Mantle like a flame of fire.

Thus came Olaf to his own,
When upon the night wind blown,
Passed that cry along the shore;
And he answered, while the rifted
Streamer o'er him shook and shifted,
"I accept thy challenge, Thor!"

He not only accepted the challenge but during his life fought the battle against the grim idol and his votaries, entering his temples and destroying his images; after which bishops and preachers were brought out from England to instruct the people in the doctrines and

precepts of the christian religion. In two years open idolatry had thus been suppressed in Norway, which in name at least was a christian kingdom. He also sent Thormod, "a pious, patient, and kindly man," to Iceland where within about the same space of time christianity was by the Thingvalla, or popular assembly of that republic declared to be the religion of the country. "Hardly any King," says Snorro, "was ever so well "obeyed, by one class out of zeal and love, by the other "out of dread." He was much more honoured and renowned than either of the Kings of Denmark or Sweden, and being now a widower, married Princess Thyri, sister of King Svein. She urged him to go on an expedition to Wendsland to get some possessions of her own which were withheld from her by King Burislaw.

There was a formidable conspiracy between King Svein of Denmark, King Olaf of Sweden, and Jarl Eric, a powerful Swedish Prince or Earl there, stimulated by Queen Sigrid, who had married Svein, and had long been the revengeful enemy of the King of Norway. They employed a base and treacherous Jarl, Sigwald of Jomsburg, to ingratiate himself with the King of Norway and to betray him to his enemies.

The Norwegian king sailed to Wendsland, settled his wife's claims, and enjoyed the hospitality of King Burislaw, and was returning with his fine fleet in loose order, when the traitor led him into a bay where the combined fleets, ready for fight and informed of the King's progress, were in ambuscade.

Olaf's captains entreated him to hold on his course, and refuse to fight on such unequal terms. "Strike the sails," said the hero, "Never men of mine shall think of flight. I never fled from battle. Let God dispose of my life; but flight I will never take."

He beat off the Swedish and Danish fleets, but then Jarl Eric came up, and ever and anon strengthened his crews from those of the Swedes and Danes who were out of range. Olaf stood high on the quarterdeck of his "Long Serpent" and fought all day, throwing

javelins with both hands with deadly aim. Eric twice boarded him and was twice repulsed. A famous archer helped him and twice nearly shot Jarl Eric. As he drew his bow a third time it was broken by an arrow shot by direction of the revengeful Jarl Eric.

The battle raged till the King, still standing on his quarterdeck, was wounded, and Eric boarded for the third time and hewed down the mast. It was plain that the King must soon yield to his cruel and vindictive foe. Kolbiorn the marshal, armed and clothed like the King, stood beside him. Let the Saga given by the Poet Longfellow describe the event.

Then Kolbiorn speaks in the ear
Of King Olaf a word of cheer,
In a whisper that none may hear,
With a smile on his tremulous lip.

Two shields raised high in the air,
Two flashes of golden hair,
Two scarlet meteors glare,
And both have leaped from the ship.

* * * * * *

There is told a wonderful tale,
How the King stripped off his mail,
Like leaves of the brown sea-kale,
As he swam beneath the main.

But the young grew old and grey
And never, by night or by day,
In his kingdom of Norraway
Was King Olaf seen again.

Olaf, who at first was called "Thickset," gave effectual aid by his military and engineering skill to Ethelred the Unready and Edmund Ironside, in resisting the Danes. He went to Normandy where he was highly esteemed; but it was in England that he became deeply religious

and very zealous for the promotion of the christian religion, to which Mr. Carlyle says "he directed all "his strength when strength and authority were lent "him, to establishing it in Norway and suppressing "and abolishing Vikingism there; both of which "objects and their respective worth and unworth he "must himself have long known too well."

The nominal christianity of that kingdom wanted life and reality under the successors of Olaf Tryggevesen, and many of the Bonders or peasant proprietors had relapsed into the old idolatry. This King Olaf, the Saint as he was afterwards called, resolved to restore the true religion, and he consistently administered the laws with strict justice, ever maintaining the right, and punishing violence, robbery, and oppression.

Snorro gives a vivid picture of a popular assembly, or Thing by which we are reminded of Elijah and the Priests of Baal at Mount Carmel. Gudbrand, leader of the Bonders, said that the God of the christians could not be seen like Thor, and that if Thor was brought from his temple the christians would melt before him. The Bonders shouted yea.

The Thing was to be held in a great field on the morrow, and the King commanded Kolbiorn the Strong to be near him, duly instructed. The hideous image of Thor was brought out and placed near the Bonders, the King and his people being on the other side. The idol was hollow and was fed with daily rations of cakes and meat. The King denounced the grim idol as dumb, deaf, and incapable of motion, and as the sun rose in splendour he directed the multitude to look at that glorious manifestation of divine power. And while they gazed, Kolbiorn with one powerful stroke shattered Thor, and enormous mice, lizards, and other reptiles, the consumers of his provisions, rushed out, terrifying the superstitious Bonders, who ran away; but being recalled, the King challenged them to fight for Thor or accept Christianity, which last they all agreed to do.

King Olaf the saint had a troubled reign, and about the year 1030 was killed when bravely fighting against rebel chiefs. Four churches were dedicated to him in London, of which two remain to this day, and from one of them Mr. Carlyle says "the thrice famous Tooley "Street gets its name, where those three tailors address-"ing parliament and the universe, sublimely styled "themselves, 'We the people of England.' Saint "Olave Street, Saint Oley Street, Stooley Street, "Tooley Street; such are the metamorphoses of "human fame in the world!"

I pass on to the last of the kings noticed in Mr. Carlyle's narrative, Hakon the 7th, or Hakon the old, who died at the age of 59, "probably a long life for a Norway king." Alexander the II. of Scotland wished to purchase from him his sovereignty of the Western Isles, which Hakon refused, and sailed with a strong fleet to visit those islands, and to claim Arran and Bute, and the two Cumbraes, as having been given to his ancestors by Donald Bain. After taking Arran and Bute he landed at Largs in Ayrshire, but the expedition proved most disastrous; for the terrible storms at sea, and strong resistance of the Scots on their native shore compelled him to retreat. Before this last expedition he had been a great and successful politician; and among his achievements he accomplished the union of republican Iceland with his kingdom of Norway. After the battle of Largs, says Mr. Carlyle,

"Hakon gathered his wrecks together, and sorrow-"fully made for Orkney. It is possible enough, as our "guide books now say, he may have gone by Iona, "Mull, and the narrow seas inside of Skye; and that "this *Kyle-Akin*, favourably known to sea bathers in "that region, may actually mean the *Kyle* (narrow "strait) of Hakon, where Hakon may have dropped "anchor, and rested for a little while in smooth water "and beautiful environment, safe from equinoctial "storms. But poor Hakon's heart was now broken. "He went to Orkney; died there in the winter; never "beholding Norway more."

Mr. Carlyle concludes his essay with these reflections, well worthy of consideration. "The violences, fight-"ings, crimes—ah yes, these seldom fail, and they are "very lamentable. But always too among the old popula-"tions, there was one saving element; the now want "of which, especially the unlamented want, transcends "all lamentation. Here is one of those strange, "piercing winged-words of Ruskin, which has in it a "terrible truth for us in these epochs now come.

"My friends, the follies of modern liberalism, many "and great though they be, are practically summed in "this denial or neglect of the quality and intrinsic value "of things. Its rectangular beatitudes, and spherical "benevolences,—theology of universal indulgence, and "jurisprudence which will hang no rogues, mean, one "and all of them, in the root, incapacity of discerning "or refusal to discern, worth and unworth in anything, "and least of all in man; whereas nature and heaven "command you, at your peril, to discern worth from "unworth in every thing, and most of all in man. "Your main problem is that ancient and trite one, "'Who is the best man?' and the fates forgive much, "—forgive the wildest, fiercest, cruellest experiments, "—if fairly made for the determination of that.

"But if you refuse such inquiry, and maintain every "man for his neighbours' match,—if you give vote to "the simple, and liberty to the vile, the powers of those "spiritual and material worlds in due time present you "inevitably with the same problem, soluble now only "wrong side upwards; and your robbing and slaying "must be done then to find out, 'Who is the worst "man?' Which in so wide an order of merit, is, "indeed, not easy, but a complete Tammany Ring, "and lowest circle in the Inferno of Worst, you are "sure to find, and to be governed by."—*Fors Clavigera, Letter 14th.*

Modern Norway in proportion to her population of of 1,763,000 has the largest commercial navy in the world, no less than 52,630 being sailors, who have

good right to sing the "Deeds of Fame" of their warlike ancestors, according to that spirited Norse melody, beautifully harmonised by Pearsall.

The hardy Norseman's house, of yore,
Was on the foaming wave;
And there he gather'd bright renown,
The bravest of the brave!

Oh! ne'er should we forget our sires,
Wherever we may be,
They bravely won a gallant name
And rul'd the stormy sea.

What! though our power be weaker now
Than it was wont to be,
When boldly forth our fathers sailed,
And conquered Normandy;—

We still may sing their deeds of fame,
Wherever we may be,
For they did win a gallant name,
And ruled the stormy sea!

POEMS.

Poems.

WINTER.

A DIRGE.

THE wintry west extends his blast,
And hail and rain does blaw;
Or the stormy north sends driving forth
The blinding sleet and snaw:
While, tumbling brown the burn comes down,
And roars frae bank to brae;
And bird and beast in covert rest,
And pass the heartless day.

"The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,"[1]
The joyless winter-day,
Let others fear, to me more dear
Than all the pride of May:
The tempest's howl, it soothes my soul,
My griefs it seems to join:
The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine!

[1] Dr. Young.—R. B.

Thou Pow'r Supreme, whose mighty scheme
These woes of mine fulfil,
Here, firm, I rest, they must be best,
Because they are Thy will!
Then all I want (Oh! do thou grant
This one request of mine!)
Since to enjoy thou dost deny,
Assist me to resign.

A PRAYER, UNDER THE PRESSURE OF VIOLENT ANGUISH.

O THOU Great Being! what Thou art
Surpasses me to know:
Yet sure I am, that known to Thee
Are all Thy works below.

Thy creature here before Thee stands,
All wretched and distrest;
Yet sure those ills that wring my soul,
Obey Thy high behest.

Sure, Thou, Almighty, canst not act
From cruelty or wrath!
O, free my weary eyes from tears,
Or close them fast in death!

But if I must afflicted be,
To suit some wise design;
Then man my soul with firm resolves
To bear and not repine!

1782.

THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR MAILIE,[1] THE AUTHOR'S ONLY PET YOWE.

AN UNCO MOURNFU' TALE.

As Mailie an' her lambs thegither,
Were ae day nibbling on the tether,
Upon her cloot[2] she coost[3] a hitch,[4]
An' owre she warsl'd[5] in the ditch;
There, groaning, dying, she did lie,
When Hughoc[6] he cam doytin by.
Wi' glowrin een, an' lifted han's,
Poor Hughoc like a statue stan's;
He saw her days were near-hand ended,
But, waes my heart! he could na mend it!
He gaped wide, but naething spak.
At length poor Mailie silence brak.

"O thou, whase lamentable face
Appears to mourn my woefu' case!
My dying words attentive hear,
An' bear them to my Master dear.
"Tell him, if e'er again he keep
As muckle gear as buy a sheep,
O, bid him never tie them mair
Wi' wicked strings o' hemp or hair!
But ca' them out to park or hill,
An' let them wander at their will;

[1] Burns had, partly by way of frolic, bought a ewe and two lambs, and she was tethered in a field adjoining the house at Lochlea. He and his brother Gilbert, going out with their teams at noon, were met by Hugh Wilson, a curious-looking, awkward boy, with much anxiety in his face, with the information that the ewe had entangled herself in the tether, and was lying in the ditch. Robert was much tickled with Hughoc's appearance and postures on the occasion. Poor Mailie was set to rights, and when we returned from the plough in the evening, he repeated her "Death and Dying Words" pretty much in the way they now stand.

[2] Hoof. [3] Cast. [4] Loop. [5] Tumbled.

[6] A neibor herd-callan. —R. B.

So may his flocks increase, an' grow
To scores o' lambs, an' packs o' woo'![1]
"Tell him, he was a Master kin',
An' ay was guid to me an' mine;
An' now my dying charge I gie him,
My helpless lambs, I trust them wi' him.
"O, bid him save their harmless lives,
Frae dogs, an' tods, an' butchers' knives!
But gie them guid cow-milk their fill,
Till they be fit to fend[2] themsel:
An' tent them duly, e'en an' morn,
Wi' teats o' hay, an' ripps[3] o' corn.
"An' may they never learn the gaets[4]
Of ither vile, wanrestfu'[5] pets!
To slink thro' slaps,[6] an' reave[7] an' steal,
At stacks o' pease, or stocks o' kail.
So may they like their great Forbears,[8]
For monie a year come thro' the shears;
So wives will gie them bits o' bread,
An' bairns greet[9] for them when they're dead.
"My poor toop-lamb,[10] my son an' heir,
O, bid him breed him up wi' care!
An' if he live to be a beast,
To pit some havins[11] in his breast!
An' warn him, what I winna name,
To stay content wi' yowes at hame;
An' not to rin an' wear his cloots,
Like ither menseless, graceless brutes.
"An' niest my yowie,[12] silly thing,
Gude keep thee frae a tether-string!
O, may thou ne'er forgather up
Wi' ony blastit, moorland toop;
But ay keep mind to moop[13] an' mell,[14]
Wi' sheep o' credit like thysel!
"And now, my bairns, wi' my last breath,
I lea'e my blessin wi' you baith:

[1] Wool. [2] Feed. [3] Handfuls. [4] Ways. [5] Restless.
[6] Fences. [7] Rove. [8] Forefathers. [9] Weep. [10] Ram
[11] Manners. [12] Ewe. [13] Nibble. [14] Associate.

An' when you think upo' your Mither,
Mind to be kind to ane anither.
"Now, honest Hughoc, dinna fail
To tell my Master a' my tale;
An' bid him burn this cursed tether,
An', for thy pains, thou'se get my blether.

This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head,
An' clos'd her een amang the dead!

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY.

LAMENT in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' saut tears trickling down your nose;
Our Bardie's fate is at a close,
Past a' remead;
The last, sad cape-stane of his woes;
Poor Mailie's dead!

It's no the loss o' warl's gear,
That could sae bitter draw the tear,
Or mak our Bardie, dowie,[1] wear
The mourning weed:
He's lost a friend and neebor dear,
In Mailie dead.

Thro' a' the toun she trotted by him;
A lang half-mile she could descry him;
Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,
She ran wi' speed:
A friend mair faithfu' ne'er cam nigh him,
Than Mailie dead.

[1] Sorrowful.

I wat she was a sheep o' sense,
An' could behave hersel wi' mense;
I'll say't, she never brak a fence,
Thro' thievish greed.
Our Bardie, lanely, keeps the Spence[1]
Sin' Mailie's dead.

Or, if he wanders up the howe,[2]
Her living image, in her yowe,
Comes bleating to him owre the knowe,[3]
For bits o' bread;
An' down the briny pearls rowe
For Mailie dead.

She was nae get o' moorland tips,[4]
Wi' tawted[5] ket, an' hairy hips;
For her forbears were brought in ships,
Frae yont the Tweed:
A bonnier fleesh ne'er cross'd the clips[6]
Than Mailie dead.

Wae worth the man wha first did shape
That vile, wanchancie[7] thing—a rape!
It maks guid fellows girn an' gape,
Wi' chokin dread;
An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape,
For Mailie dead.

O, a' ye Bards on bonnie Doon!
An' wha on Ayr your chanters[8] tune!
Come, join the melancholious croon
O' Robin's reed!
His heart will never get aboon
His Mailie dead!

[1] Parlour. [2] Dell. [3] Hillock. [4] Rams. [5] Matted fleece.
[6] Shears. [7] Unlucky. [8] Bagpipes.

1784.

THE FIRST PSALM.

THE man, in life wherever plac'd,
Hath happiness in store,
Who walks not in the wickeds' way,
Nor learns their guilty lore!

Nor from the seat of scornful pride
Casts forth his eyes abroad,
But with humility and awe
Still walks before his God.

That man shall flourish like the trees
Which by the streamlets grow;
The fruitful top is spread on high,
And firm the root below.

But he, whose blossom buds in guilt,
Shall to the ground be cast,
And like the rootless stubble tos'd,
Before the sweeping blast.

For why? that God the good adore
Hath giv'n them peace and rest,
But hath decreed that wicked men
Shall ne'er be truly blest.

THE FIRST SIX VERSES OF THE NINETIETH PSALM.

O THOU, the first, the greatest friend
Of all the human race!
Whose strong right hand has ever been
Their stay and dwelling place!

Before the mountains heav'd their heads
Beneath thy forming hand,
Before this pond'rous globe itself,
Arose at Thy command;

That pow'r, which rais'd and still upholds
This universal frame,
From countless, unbeginning time
Was ever still the same.

Those mighty periods of years,
Which seem to us so vast,
Appear no more before Thy sight
Than yesterday that's past.

Thou giv'st the word; Thy creature, man,
Is to existence brought;
Again Thou say'st, "Ye sons of men,
Return ye into nought!"

Thou layest them, with all their cares,
In everlasting sleep;
As with a flood thou tak'st them off
With overwhelming sweep.

They flourish like the morning flow'r,
In beauty's pride array'd;
But long ere night cut down, it lies
All wither'd and decay'd.

THE BELLES OF MAUCHLINE.

Tune—"Bonnie Dundee."

In Mauchline there dwells six proper young belles,
The pride o' the place and its neighbourhood a';
Their carriage and dress, a stranger would guess,
In Lun'on or Paris they'd gotten it a'.

Miss Miller is fine, Miss Markland's divine,
Miss Smith she has wit, and Miss Betty is braw;
There's beauty and fortune to get wi' Miss Morton,
But Armour's[1] the jewel for me o' them a'.

1785.

EPISTLE TO DAVIE,[2] A BROTHER POET.

WHILE winds frae aff Ben-Lomond blaw,
And bar the doors wi' driving snaw,
And hing us owre the ingle,[3]
I set me down, to pass the time,
And spin a verse or twa o' rhyme,
In hamely, westlin jingle.
While frosty winds blaw in the drift,
Ben to the chimla-lug,[4]
I grudge a wee the great folk's gift,
That live sae bien[5] an' snug:
I tent[6] less, and want less
Their roomy fire-side;
But hanker and canker,
To see their cursed pride.

It's hardly in a body's pow'r,
To keep, at times, frae being sour,
To see how things are shar'd;
How best o' chiels are whiles in want,
While coofs on countless thousands rant,
And ken na how to wair't;[7]
But, Davie, lad, ne'er fash[8] your head,
Tho' we hae little gear,

[1] Jean, afrerwards his wife.

[2] David Sillar was the friend, ploughman, and poet, addressed in this epistle, on hearing which repeated by Burns, his brother Gilbert encouraged its publication, and the suggestion of becoming an author was then first received with favour by them both.

[3] Fire-place. [4] To the fireside. [5] Plentiful. [6] Heed.
[7] Spend it. [8] Trouble.

We're fit to win our daily bread,
As lang's we're hale and fier:[1]
"Mair spier na, nor fear na,"[2]
Auld age ne'er mind a feg,[3]
The last o't, the warst o't,
Is only for to beg.

To lie in kilns and barns at e'en,
When banes are craz'd, and bluid is thin,
Is, doubtless, great distress!
Yet then content could mak us blest;
Ev'n then, sometimes, we'd snatch a taste
Of truest happiness.
The honest heart that's free frae a'
Intended fraud or guile,
However fortune kick the ba',[4]
Has aye some cause to smile:
And mind still, you'll find still,
A comfort this nae sma';
Nae mair then, we'll care then,
Nae farther can we fa'.

What tho', like commoners of air,
We wander out, we know not where,
But either house or hal'?
Yet nature's charms, the hills and woods,
The sweeping vales, and foaming floods,
Are free alike to all.
In days when daisies deck the ground,
And blackbirds whistle clear,
With honest joy our hearts will bound
To see the coming year:
On braes when we please, then,
We'll sit and sowth[5] a tune;
Syne[6] rhyme till't,[7] we'll time till't,
And sing't when we hae done.

[1] Sound. [2] Ramsay.—R.B. [3] Fig. [4] Ball. [5] Whistle over. [6] Then. [7] To it.

It's no in titles nor in rank;
It's no in wealth like Lun'on bank,
To purchase peace and rest.
It's no in making muckle mair:
It's no in books; it's no in lear,[1]
To make us truly blest:
If happiness hae not her seat
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest:
Nae treasures, nor pleasures,
Could make us happy lang;
The heart aye's the part aye,
That maks us right or wrang.

Think ye, that sic as you and I,
Wha drudge and drive thro' wet an' dry,
Wi' never-ceasing toil;
Think ye, are we less blest than they,
Wha scarcely tent[2] us in their way,
As hardly worth their while?
Alas! how aft in haughty mood,
God's creatures they oppress!
Or else, neglecting a' that's guid,
They riot in excess!
Baith careless, and fearless,
Of either heav'n or hell!
Esteeming and deeming
It's a' an idle tale!

Then let us cheerfu' acquiesce;
Nor make our scanty pleasures less,
By pining at our state;
And, even should misfortunes come,
I, here wha sit, hae met wi' some,
An's thankfu' for them yet.
They gie the wit of age to youth;
They let us ken oursel;

[1] Learning. [2] Heed.

They make us see the naked truth,
The real guid and ill,
Tho' losses and crosses,
Be lessons right severe,
There's wit there, ye'll get there,
Ye'll find nae other where.

But tent me, Davie, ace o' hearts!
(To say aught less wad wrang the cartes,[1]
And flatt'ry I detest)
This life has joys for you and I:
And joys that riches ne'er could buy;
And joys the very best.
There's a' the pleasures o' the heart,
The lover an' the frien';
Ye hae your Meg,[2] your dearest part,
And I my darling Jean!
It warms me, it charms me,
To mention but her name:
It heats me, it beets me,[3]
And sets me a' on flame!

O all ye pow'rs who rule above!
O Thou, whose very self art love!
Thou know'st my words sincere!
The life-blood streaming thro' my heart,
Or my more dear immortal part,
Is not more fondly dear!
When heart-corroding care and grief
Deprive my soul of rest,
Her dear idea brings relief
And solace to my breast.
Thou Being, All-seeing,
O hear my fervent pray'r;
Still take her, and make her
Thy most peculiar care!

[1] Cards.

[2] "Meg" was Margaret Orr, the nursery-maid of Mrs. Stewart, of Stair.—A. C. [3] Excites.

All hail, ye tender feelings dear!
The smile of love, the friendly tear,
  The sympathetic glow!
Long since, this world's thorny ways
Had number'd out my weary days,
  Had it not been for you!
Fate still has blest me with a friend,
  In every care and ill;
And oft a more endearing band,
  A tie more tender still.
    It lightens, it brightens
      The tenebrific scene,
    To meet with, and greet with
      My Davie, or my Jean.

O, how that name inspires my style!
The words come skelpin,[1] rank and file,
  Amaist before I ken!
The ready measure rins as fine,
As Phœbus and the famous Nine
  Were glowrin owre my pen.
My spaviet[2] Pegasus will limp,
  Till ance he's fairly het;
And then he'll hilch,[3] and stilt, and jimp,
  An' rin an unco fit:
    But lest then, the beast then,
      Should rue this hasty ride,
    I'll light now, and dight[4] now
      His sweaty, wizen'd[5] hide.

[1] Marching. [2] Spavined. [3] Hobble. [4] Wipe. [5] Shrunk.

SECOND EPISTLE TO DAVIE,

A BROTHER POET.[1]

AULD NEIBOR,

I'M three times doubly o'er your debtor,
For your auld farrant[2] friendly letter;
Though I maun say't, I doubt ye flatter,
Ye speak sae fair,
For my puir, silly, rhymin' clatter
Some less maun sair.[3]

Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle;
Lang may your elbuck jink[4] and diddle,
To cheer you through the weary widdle
O' war'ly cares,
Till bairns' bairns kindly cuddle
Your auld grey hairs.

But, Davie, lad, I'm rede[5] ye're glaikit,[6]
I'm tauld the Muse ye ha'e negleckit;
An' gif it's sae, ye sud be licket
Until ye fyke;[7]
Sic hauns as you sud ne'er be faiket,[8]
Be hain't[9] wha like.

For me, I'm on Parnassus' brink,
Rivin'[10] the words to gar[11] them clink;
Whyles daez't wi' love, whyles daez't wi' drink,
Wi' jads or masons;
An' whyles, but aye owre late, I think,
Braw sober lessons.

[1] This epistle is prefixed to the poems of David Sillar, which were published in Kilmarnock, in the year 1789.
[2] Sensible, sagacious. [3] Serve. [4] Elbow jerk. [5] Told.
[6] Idle, foolish. [7] Wince. [8] Unknown. [9] Spared. [10] Twisting.
[11] Make.

Of a' the thoughtless sons o' man,
Commen' me to the bardie clan;
Except it be some idle plan
O' rhymin' clink,
The devil haet, that I sud ban[1]
They ever think.

Nae thought, nae view, nae scheme o' livin',
Nae cares to gi'e us joy or grievin';
But just the pouchie put the nieve[2] in,
An' while ought's there,
Then hiltie, skiltie, we gae scrievin',[3]
An' fash[4] nae mair.

Leeze me on rhyme! its aye a treasure,
My chief, amaist my only pleasure,
At hame, a-fiel', at wark or leisure,
The Muse, poor hizzie!
Though rough an' raploch[5] be her measure,
She's seldom lazy.

Haud to the Muse, my dainty Davie:
The warl' may play you mony a shavie;[6]
But for the Muse, she'll never leave ye,
Though e'er sae puir,
Na, even though limpin' wi' the spavie
Frae door to door.

[1] Swear. [2] Hand. [3] Merrily. [4] Trouble. [5] Coarse. [7] Trick.

DEATH AND DR. HORNBOOK.[1]

A TRUE STORY.

SOME books are lies frae end to end,
And some great lies were never penn'd:
Ev'n Ministers, they hae been kenn'd,
In holy rapture,
A rousing whid,[2] at times, to vend,
And nail't wi' Scripture.

But this that I am gaun to tell,
Which lately on a night befell,
Is just as true's the Deil's in hell
Or Dublin city:
That e'er he nearer comes oursel
'S a muckle pity.

The Clachan yill had made me canty,
I wasna fou, but just had plenty:
I stacher'd[3] whyles, but yet took tent ay
To free the ditches;
An' hillocks, stanes, an' bushes, kenn'd ay
Frae ghaists an' witches.

[1] In the preface to the "Burns Calendar" published by Messrs. Mc. Kie and Drennan, Kilmarnock, it is stated on the reputed authority of Thomas Borland, a member of the "Bachelors' Club" of Tarbolton, founded and presided over by Burns, of which the schoolmaster John Wilson was a member, that it was not a convivial club but a strictly temperate meeting for essays and discussion, and that Wilson never sold drugs. The allusion to the alehouse and to the apothecary are therefore part of the fable. Wilson perhaps had some intention of studying medicine as a profession, at all events he announced as the subject of an essay "Medicine," and the notion so amused Burns, that on the way home and in the course of the next day he composed this clever satire. After copies had been read and handed about; some wag fixed a notice on Wilson's door, "Advice Gratis." The schoolmaster soon afterwards went to Glasgow, where he was successful as a teacher and held the appointment of Session Clerk in Gorbals parish. Although somewhat annoyed by the character ascribed to him in the poem, his friendship for Burns was not interrupted, and he was an ardent admirer of his poetry. Wilson died in 1839.

[2] Fib. [3] Staggered.

The rising moon began to glowr
The distant Cumnock hills out-owre;
To count her horns, wi' a' my pow'r,
I set mysel;
But whether she had three or four,
I cou'd na tell.

I was come round about the hill,
And todlin down on Willie's mill,
Setting my staff, wi' a' my skill,
To keep me sicker;[1]
Tho' leeward whyles, against my will,
I took a bicker.[2]

I there wi' Something did forgather,[3]
That put me in an eerie swither;[4]
An' awfu' scythe, out-owre ae shouther,
Clear-dangling hang;
A three-taed leister[5] on the ither
Lay, large an' lang.

Its stature seem'd lang Scotch ells twa,
The queerest shape that e'er I saw,
For fient a wame it had ava,
And then its shanks,
They were as thin, as sharp an' sma'
As cheeks o' branks.[6]

"Guid-een," quo' I; "Friend! hae ye been mawin,
When ither folk are busy sawin?"
It seem'd to mak a kind o' stan',
But naething spak;
At length, says I, "Friend, whare ye gaun,
Will ye go back?"

[1] Steady. [2] A short course. [3] Meet. [4] Superstitious terror.
[5] Three-pronged dart. [6] Wooden curb for horses.

It spak right howe[1]—"My name is Death,
But be na fley'd."—Quoth I, "Guid faith,
Ye're maybe come to stap my breath;
But tent[2] me, billie;
I red ye weel, tak care o' skaith,[3]
See, there's a gully!"[4]

"Gudeman," quo' he, "put up your whittle,
I'm no design'd to try its mettle;
But if I did, I wad be kittle[5]
To be mislear'd,[6]
I wad na mind it, no that spittle
Out-owre my beard."

"Weel, weel!" says I, "a bargain be't;
Come, gies your hand, an' sae we're gree't;
We'll ease our shanks an' tak a seat,
Come, gies your news;
This while[7] ye hae been mony a gate,
At mony a house."

"Ay, ay!" quo' he, an' shook his head,
"It's e'en a lang, lang time, indeed,
Sin' I began to nick the thread,
An' choke the breath:
Folk maun do something for their bread,
An' sae maun Death.

"Sax thousand years are near hand fled,
Sin' I was to the butching bred,
An' mony a scheme in vain's been laid,
To stap or scaur me;
Till ane Hornbook's[8] ta'en up the trade,
An' faith, he'll waur[8] me.

[1] Hollow. [2] Be careful. [3] Damage. [4] A large knife. [5] Difficult.
[6] "Put out of my art."—*Chambers*.
[7] An epidemical fever was then raging in that country.—R. B.
[8] This gentleman, Dr. Hornbook, is, professionally, a brother of the Sovereign Order of the Ferula; but, by intuition and inspiration, is at once an apothecary, surgeon, and physician.—R. B.

"Ye ken Jock Hornbook i' the Clachan,[1]
Deil mak his king's-hood in a spleuchan![2]
He's grown sae well acquaint wi' Buchan[3]
An' ither chaps.
The weans haud out their fingers laughin
And pouk my hips.

"'Twas but yestreen, nae farther gaen,
I threw a noble throw at ane;
Wi' less, I'm sure, I've hundreds slain:
But deil-ma-care,
It just play'd dirl[4] on the bane,
But did nae mair.

"Hornbook was by, wi' ready art,
And had sae fortify'd the part,
That when I looked to my dart,
It was sae blunt,
Fient haet o't wad hae pierc'd the heart
Of a kail-runt.[5]

"I drew my scythe in sic a fury,
I near-haud cowpit[6] wi' my hurry,
But yet the bauld Apothecary
Withstood the shock;
I might as weel hae try'd a quarry
O' hard whin rock.

"And then, a' doctor's saws and whittles,
Of a' dimensions, shapes, an' mettles,
A' kinds o' boxes, mugs, an' bottles,
He's sure to hae;
Their Latin names as fast he rattles
As A B C.

[1] Small village. [2] Tobacco-pouch.
[3] "Buchan's Domestic Medicine."—R. B.
[4] Rattled. [5] A cabbage-stock. [6] Tumbled.

"Calces o' fossils, earths, and trees;
True Sal-marinum o' the seas;
The Farina of beans and pease,
He has't in plenty;
Aqua-fontis, what you please,
He can content ye.

"Forbye some new, uncommon weapons,
Urinus Spiritus of capons;
Or Mite-horn shavings, filings, scrapings,
Distill'd *per se;*
Sal-alkali o' Midge-tail clippings,
And mony mae."

"Waes me for Johnny Ged's Hole[1] now,"
Quo' I, "if that thae news be true!
His braw calf-ward whare gowans[2] grew
Sae white and bonnie,
Nae doubt they'll rive it wi' the plew;
They'll ruin Johnnie!"

The creature grain'd an eldritch laugh,
And says, "Ye needna yoke the pleugh,
Kirk-yards will soon be till'd eneugh,
Tak ye nae fear:
They'll a' be trench'd wi' mony a sheugh[3]
In twa-three year.

"Whare I kill'd ane a fair strae-death[4]
By loss o' blood or want o' breath,
This night I'm free to tak my aith,
That Hornbook's skill
Has clad a score i' their last claith,
By drap and pill.

[1] The grave-digger.—R. B. [2] Daisies. [3] Ditch.
[4] A death in bed.

"An honest Wabster[1] to his trade,
Whase wife's twa neives were scarce weel-bred,
Gat tippence-worth to mend her head,
When it was sair;
The wife slade cannie to her bed,
But ne'er spak mair.

"A countra Laird had ta'en the batts,[2]
Or some curmurring[3] in his guts,
His only son for Hornbook sets,
An' pays him well.
The lad, for twa guid gimmer-pets,[4]
Was Laird himsel.

"That's just a swatch[5] o' Hornbook's way;
Thus goes he on from day to day,
Thus does he poison, kill, an' slay,
An's weel pay'd for't;
Yet stops me o' my lawfu' prey,
Wi' his —— dirt.

"But, hark! I'll tell you of a plot,
Tho' dinna ye be speaking o't;
I'll nail the self-conceited Sot
As dead's a herrin;
Niest time we meet, I'll wad[6] a groat,
He gets his fairin!"

But just as he began to tell,
The auld kirk-hammer strak the bell
Some wee short hour ayont the twal,
Which rais'd us baith:
I took the way which pleas'd mysel,
And sae did Death.

[1] Weaver. [2] Bots.
[3] A rumbling. [4] Two-year old sheep. [5] Sample. [6] Wager

TO WILLIAM SIMPSON,

THE PARISH SCHOOLMASTER OF OCHILTREE.

May, 1785.

I GAT your letter, winsome Willie;
Wi' gratefu' heart I thank you brawlie;
Tho' I maun say't, I wad be silly,
An' unco vain,
Should I believe, my coaxing billie,[1]
Your flatterin strain.

But I'se believe ye kindly meant it,
I sud be laith to think ye hinted
Ironic satire, sidelins sklented[2]
On my poor Musie;
Tho' in sic phraisin terms ye've penn'd it,
I scarce excuse ye.

My senses wad be in a creel,[3]
Should I but dare a hope to speel,[4]
Wi' Allan, or wi' Gilbertfiel',[5]
The braes o' fame;
Or Fergusson, a writer chiel,
A deathless name.

(O Fergusson! thy glorious parts
Ill suited law's dry, musty arts!
My curse upon your whunstane hearts,
Ye Enbrugh Gentry!
The tythe o' what ye waste at cartes
Wad stow'd his pantry!)

Yet when a tale comes i' my head,
Or lasses gave my heart a screed,[6]
As while's they're like to be my deed,
(Oh sad disease!)
I kittle up my rustic reed;
It gies me ease.

[1] Brother. [2] Sidelong flung. [3] Be crazed. [4] Climb.
[5] Allan Ramsay and Hamilton of Gilbertfield. [6] Rent.

Auld Coila, now, may fidge[1] fu' fain,
She's gotten Poets o' her ain,
Chiels wha their chanters winna hain,[2]
But tune their lays,
Till echoes a' resound again
Her weel-sung praise.

Nae Poet thought her worth his while,
To set her name in measur'd style;
She lay like some unkend-of Ise,
Beside New Holland,
Or whare wild-meeting oceans boil
Besouth Magellan.

Ramsay an' famous Fergusson
Gied Forth an Tay a lift aboon;
Yarrow an' Tweed, to monie a tune,
Owre Scotland rings,
While Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, an' Doon,
Nae body sings.

Th' Illissus, Tiber, Thames, an' Seine,
Glide sweet in monie a tunefu' line!
But, Willie, set your fit to mine,
An' cock your crest,
We'll gar our streams an' burnies shine
Up wi' the best.

We'll sing auld Coila's plains an' fells,
Her moors red-brown wi' heather bells,
Her banks an' braes, her dens an' dells,
Whare glorious Wallace
Aft bure[3] the gree, as story tells,
Frae southron billies.

[1] Be right glad. [2] Will not spare their bagpipes. [3] Bore the bell.

At Wallace' name, what Scottish blood
But boils up in a spring-tide flood!
Oft have our fearless fathers strode
By Wallace' side,
Still pressing onward, red-wat-shod,[1]
Or glorious dy'd.

O, sweet are Coila's haughs[2] an' woods,
When lintwhites[3] chant amang the buds,
And jinkin[4] hares, in amorous whids,
Their loves enjoy,
While thro' the braes the cushat croods[5]
Wi' wailfu' cry!

Ev'n winter bleak has charms to me,
When winds rave thro' the naked tree;
Or frosts on hills of Ochiltree
Are hoary gray;
Or blinding drifts wild-furious flee,
Dark'ning the day!

O Nature! a' thy shews an' forms
To feeling, pensive hearts hae charms!
Whether the summer kindly warms,
Wi' life an' light,
Or winter howls, in gusty storms,
The lang, dark night!

The Muse, nae Poet ever fand[6] her,
Till by himsel he learn'd to wander,
Adown some trotting burn's meander,
An' no think lang;
O sweet, to stray an' pensive ponder
A heart-felt sang!

[1] Blood over the shoe-tops. [2] Valleys. [3] Linnets.
[4] Dodging. [5] Coos. [6] Found.

The war'ly race may drudge an' drive,
Hog-shouther,[1] jundie[2], stretch, an' strive,—
Let me fair Nature's face descrive,
And I, wi' pleasure,
Shall let the busy, grumbling hive
Bum[3] owre their treasure.

Fareweel, "my rhyme-composing brither!"
We've been owre lang unkenn'd to ither:
Now let us lay our heads thegither,
In love fraternal;
May Envy wallop in a tether,
Black fiend, infernal!

While highlandmen hate tolls an' taxes
While moorlan' herds[4] like guid, fat braxies,[5]
While terra firma, on her axis,
Diurnal turns,
Count on a friend, in faith an' practice,
In Robert Burns.

TO A MOUSE, ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST, WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785.[6]

WEE, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle![7]
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murd'ring pattle![8]

[1] Press forward. [2] Justle. [3] Hum.
[4] Shepherds. [5] Diseased Sheep.
[6] A farm-servant, lately living, was driving the plough, which Burns held, when a mouse ran across the field. The man's first impulse was to rush after and kill it; but the poet stopped him, and turning thoughtful, the verses were composed.
[7] Hurry. [8] Instrument for clearing the plough.

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker[1] in a thrave
'S a sma' request:
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big[2] a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell[3] an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till, crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,[4]
To thole[5] the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch[6] cauld!

[1] A few ears of corn out of 24 sheaves. [2] Build. [3] Bitter.
[4] Without abiding place. [5] Endure. [6] Hoar-frost.

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,[1]
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men,
Gang aft a-gley,[2]
An' lea'e us nought but grief and pain,
For promis'd joy.

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, Och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
An' forward tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

EPISTLE TO JOHN LAPRAIK, AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD.

WHILE briers an' woodbines budding green,
An' paitricks[3] scraichin loud at e'en,
An' morning poussie[4] whiddin seen,
Inspire my Muse,
This freedom in an unknown frien'
I pray excuse.

On Fasten-een we had a rockin,
To ca' the crack[5] and weave our stockin:
And there was muckle fun and jokin,
Ye need na doubt;
At length we had a hearty yokin
At sang about.

There was ae sang, amang the rest,
Aboon them a' it pleas'd me best,
That some kind husband had addrest
To some sweet wife:
It thirl'd[6] the heart-strings thro' the breast,
A' to the life.

[1] Thyself alone. [2] Wrong.
[3] Partridges. [4] Hare. [5] Chat. [6] Thrilled.

I've scarce heard ought described sae weel,
What gen'rous, manly bosoms feel;
Thought I, can this be Pope, or Steele,
Or Beattie's wark?
They tauld me 'twas an auld kind chiel
About Muirkirk.

It pat me fidgin[1] fain to hear't,
And sae about him there I speered,[2]
Then a' that ken'd him round declar'd
He had ingine,
That nane excell'd it, few cam near't,
It was sae fine;

That, set him to a pint o' ale,
An' either douce or merry tale,
Or rhymes an' sangs he'd made himsel,
Or witty catches,
'Tween Inverness and Teviotdale,
He had few matches.

Then up I gat, an' swoor an aith,
Tho' I should pawn my pleugh and graith,
Or die a cadger pownie's death,
At some dyke-back,
A pint an' gill I'd gie them baith
To hear you crack.

But, first an' foremost, I should tell,
Amaist as soon as I could spell,
I to the crambo-jingle fell,
Though rude an' rough,
Yet crooning to a body's sel',
Does weel eneugh.

I am na poet, in a sense,
But just a rhymer, like, by chance,

[1] Eager. [2] Enquired.

An' ha'e to learning nae pretence,
Yet, what the matter?
Whene'er my Muse does on me glance,
I jingle at her.

Your critic-folk may cock their nose,
And say, "How can you e'er propose,
You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,
To mak' a sang?"
But, by your leave, my learned foes,
Ye're may be wrang.

What's a' your jargon o' your schools,
Your Latin names for horns an' stools;
If honest Nature made you fools,
What sairs your grammars?
Ye'd better ta'en up spades and shools,
Or knappin[1]-hammers.

A set o' dull, conceited hashes,[2]
Confuse their brains in college classes!
They gang in stirks,[3] and come out asses,
Plain truth to speak;
An' syne they think to climb Parnassus
By dint o' Greek!

Gie me a spark o' Nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire;
Then though I drudge through dub an' mire
At pleugh or cart,
My Muse, though hamely in attire,
May touch the heart.

Oh, for a spunk o' Allan's[4] glee,
Or Fergusson's, the bauld and slee,
Or bright Lapraik's, my friend to be,
If I can hit it!
That would be lear eneugh for me,
If I could get it.

[1] Stone-breaking. [2] Blockheads. [3] Year-old cattle (bullock).
[4] Allan Ramsay.

Now, sir, if ye ha'e friends enow,
Though real friends, I b'leive, are few,
Yet, if your catalogue be fou,
I'se no insist,
But gif ye want ae friend that's true,
I'm on your list.

I winna blaw about mysel';
As ill I like my fau'ts to tell;
But friends, an' folk that wish me well,
They sometimes roose[1] me;
Though I maun own, as monie still
As far abuse me.

* * * * *

But Mauchline race, or Mauchline fair,
I should be proud to meet you there;
We'se gi'e a night's discharge to care
If we forgather,
An' ha'e a swap o' rhymin' ware,
Wi' ane anither.

The four-gill chap,[2] we'se gar[3] him clatter,
An' kirsen him wi' reekin' water;
Syne we'll sit down an' tak' our whitter,[4]
To cheer our heart;
An' faith, we'se be acquainted better
Before we part.

There's naething like the honest nappy![5]
Whar'll[6] ye e'er see men sae happy,
Or women sonsie, saft, and sappy,[7]
'Tween morn and morn,
As them wha like to taste the drappy[8]
In glass or horn?

[1] Praise. [2] Stoup. [3] Make.
[4] Hearty draught of liquor. [5] Ale. [6] Where will.
[7] Comely. [8] Small drop.

I've seen me dais't[1] upon a time,
I scarce could wink, or see a styme;[2]
Just ae half-mutchkin does me prime,
Aught less is little,
Then back I rattle on the rhyme,
As gleg's a whittle![3]

Awa' ye selfish war'ly race,
Wha think that havins, sense, and grace,
E'en love and friendship, should give place
To catch-the-plack![4]
I dinna[5] like to see your face,
Nor hear you crack.[6]

But ye whom social pleasure charms,
Whose hearts the tide of kindness warms,
Who hold your being on the terms,
"Each aid the others,"
Come to my bowl, come to my arms,
My friends, my brothers!

But, to conclude my lang epistle,
As my auld pen's worn to the grissle;
Twa lines frae you wad gar me fissle,
Who am, most fervent,
While I can either sing or whissle,
Your friend and servant.

[1] Dazed. [2] In the least.
[3] As keen as a knife. [4] Money. [5] Do not. [6] Talk.

HALLOWEEN.[1]

The following poem will, by many readers, be well enough understood; but, for the sake of those who are unacquainted with the manners and traditions of the country where the scene is cast, notes are added, to give some account of the principal charms and spells of that night, so big with prophecy to the peasantry in the west of Scotland. The passion of prying into futurity makes a striking part of the history of human nature, in its rude state, in all ages and nations; and it may be some entertainment to a philosophic mind, if any such should honour the Author with a perusal, to see the remains of it, among the more unenlightened in our own.—R. B.

> Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
> The simple pleasures of the lowly train;
> To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
> One native charm, than all the gloss of art.—*Goldsmith.*

UPON that night, when Fairies light
On Cassilis Downans[2] dance,
Or owre the lays,[3] in splendid blaze,
On sprightly coursers prance;
Or for Colean the route is ta'en,
Beneath the moon's pale beams;
There, up the Cove[4] to stray an' rove,
Amang the rocks and streams
To sport that night.

Amang the bonnie, winding banks,
Where Doon rins, wimplin'[5] clear,
Where Bruce[6] ance rul'd the martial ranks,
An' shook his Carrick spear,

[1] Halloween is thought to be a night when witches, devils, and other mischief making beings are all abroad on their baneful midnight errands; particularly those aerial people, the fairies, are said on that night to hold a grand anniversary.—R.B.

[2] Certain little, romantic, rocky, green hills, in the neighbourhood of the ancient seat of the Earls of Cassilis.—R.B. [3] Fields.

[4] A noted cavern near Colean-honse, called the Cove of Colean; which, as well as Cassilis Downans, is famed in country story for being a favourite haunt of fairies.—R.B. [5] Meandering.

[6] The famous family of that name, the ancestors of Robert, the great deliverer of his country, were Earls of Carrick.—R.B.

Some merry, friendly, contra folks,
Together did convene,
To burn their nits,[1] an' pou their stocks,[2]
An' haud their Halloween
Fu' blythe that night.

The lasses feat,[3] an' cleanly neat,
Mair braw than when they're fine;
Their faces blythe, fu' sweetly kythe,[4]
Hearts leal, an' warm, an' kin:
The lads sae trig,[5] wi' wooer-babs,[6]
Weel knotted on their garten,
Some unco blate, an' some wi' gabs,
Gar lasses' hearts gang startin
Whyles fast at night.

Then, first, an' foremost, thro' the kail,
Their stocks[7] maun a' be sought ance:
They steek their een, an' grape[8] an' wale,[9]
For muckle anes, an' straught anes.
Poor hav'rel[10] Will fell aff the drift,
An' wander'd thro' the bow-kail,[11]
An' pow't for want o' better shift,
A runt[12] was like a sow-tail,
Sae bow't that night.

[1] Nuts. [2] Plants of kail. [3] Spruce. [4] Shewn.
[5] Smart. [6] Garters knotted with loops.

[7] The first ceremony of Halloween is, pulling each a stock, or plant of kail. They must go out, hand in hand, with eyes shut, and pull the first they meet with. Its being big or little, straight or crooked, is prophetic of the size and shape of the grand object of all their spells—the husband or wife. If any yird, or earth, stick to the root, that is tocher, or fortune; and the taste of the custoc, that is, the heart of the stem, is indicative of the natural temper and disposition. Lastly, the stems, or, to give them their ordinary appellation, the runts, are placed somewhere above the head of the door; and the christian names of the people whom chance brings into the house, are, according to the priority of placing the runts, the names in question.—R. B.

[8] Grope. [9] Choose.
[10] Half-witted. [11] Cabbage. [12] A cabbage stem.

Then, straught or crooked, yird[1] or nane,
They roar an' cry a' throu'ther;[2]
The vera wee things, toddlin, rin,
Wi' stocks out-owre their shouther;
An' gif the custocs[3] sweet or sour,
Wi' joctelegs[4] they taste them;
Syne coziely,[5] aboon the door,
Wi' cannie care, they've plac'd them
To lie that night.

The lasses staw[6] frae' mang them a'
To pou their stalks o' corn;
But Rab slips out, an' jinks[7] about,
Behint the muckle thorn:
He grippet Nelly hard an' fast;
Loud skirled a' the lasses;
But her tap-pickle maist was lost,
When kintlin in the fause-house[8]
Wi' him that night.

The auld guid-wife's weel-hordet[9] nits
Are round an' round divided,
An' monie lads an' lasses' fates
Are there that night decided:
Some kindle, couthie,[10] side by side,
An' burn thegither trimly;
Some start awa, wi' saucy pride,
An' jump out-owre the chimlie
Fu' high that night.

[1] Earth. [2] In confusion. [3] Hearts of stems. [4] Knives.
[5] Snugly. [6] Steal. [7] Dodges.

[8] When the corn is in a doubtful state, by being too green, or wet, the stack-builder, by means of old timber, &c. makes a large apartment in his stack, with an opening in the side which is fairest exposed to the wind: this he calls a fause-house.—R. B.

[9] Well-hoarded.

[10] Burning the nuts is a famous charm. They name the lad and the lass to each particular nut, as they lay them in the fire; and accordingly as they burn quiétly together, or start from beside one another, the course and issue of the courtship will be.—R. B.

Jean slips in twa wi' tentie[1] e'e;
Wha 'twas, she wadna tell;
But this is Jock, and this is me,
She says in to hersel:
He bleez'd owre her, an' she owre him,
As they wad never mair part;
Till, fuff! he started up the lum,[2]
An' Jean had e'en a sair heart
To see't that night.

Poor Willie, wi' his bow-kail runt,
Was brunt wi' primsie[3] Mallie,
An' Mary, nae doubt, took the drunt,[4]
To be compared to Willie:
Mall's nit lap out, wi' pridefu' fling,
An' her ain fit it brunt it;
While Willie lap, an' swoor[5] by jing,
'Twas just the way he wanted
To be that night.

Nell had the fause-house in her min',[6]
She pits hersel an' Rob in;
In loving bleeze they sweetly join,
Till white in ase[7] they're sobbin:
Nell's heart was dancing at the view;
She whisper'd Rob to leuk for't:
Rob, stownlins,[8] prie'd her bonnie mou,
Fu' cozie in the neuk for't,
Unseen that night.

But Merran sat behint their backs,
Her thoughts on Andrew Bell;
She lea'es[9] them gashing at their cracks,
An' slips out by hersel:
She thro' the yard the nearest taks,
An' to the kiln she goes then,

[1] Cautious [2] The chimney. [3] Demure. [4] Pet. [5] Swore.
[6] Mind. [7] Ashes. [8] By stealth. [9] Leaves.

An' darklins grapit for the bauks,[1]
And in the blue-clue[2] throws then,
Right fear't that night.

An' aye she win't, an' ay she swat,
I wat she made nae jaukin;[3]
Till something held within the pat,
Guid ——! but she was quaukin![4]
But whether 'twas the Deil himsel
Or whether 'twas a bauk-en',
Or whether it was Andrew Bell,
She did na wait on talking
To spier[5] that night.

Wee Jennie to her Graunie says,
"Will ye go wi' me Graunie?
I'll eat the apple[6] at the glass,
I gat frae uncle Johnie:"
She fuff't her pipe wi' sic a lunt,[7]
In wrath she was sae vap'rin,
She notic't na, an aizle[8] brunt
Her braw new worset[9] apron
Out thro' that night.

"Ye little skelpie[10]-limmer's face!
I daur you try sic sportin,
As seek the foul Thief onie place,
For him to spae[11] your fortune;

[1] Cross-beams.

[2] Whoever would, with success, try this spell, must strictly observe these directions:—Steal out, all alone, to the kiln, and, darkling, throw into the pot a clue of blue yarn; wind it in a new clue off the old one; and towards the latter end, something will hold the thread; demand, Wha hauds? *i. e.* who holds? an answer will be returned from the kiln-pot, by naming the christian and surname of your future spouse.—R. B.

[3] Dallying. [4] Quaking. [5] Inquire.

[6] Take a candle, and go alone to a looking-glass; eat an apple before it, and some traditions say, you should comb your hair all the time; the face of your conjugal companion, to be, will be seen in the glass, as if peeping over your shoulder.—R. B.

[7] Smoke. [8] Hot cinder. [9] Worsted.

[10] A word of scolding. [11] Prophesy.

Nae doubt but ye may get a sight!
Great cause ye hae to fear it;
For monie a ane has gotten fright,
An' liv'd an' di'd deleerit,[1]
On sic a night.

"Ae Hairst[2] afore the Sherra-moor,[3]
I mind't as weel's yestreen,
I was a gilpey[4] then, I'm sure
I was na past fyfteen:
The simmer had been cauld an' wat,
An' stuff was unco green;
An' ay a rankin kirn we gat,
An' just on Halloween
It fell that night."

Then up gat fechtin Jamie Fleck,
An' he swoor by his conscience,
That he could saw hemp-seed a peck;
For it was a' but nonsense:
The auld guidman raught down the pock,
An' out a handfu' gied him;
Syne bad him slip frae 'mang the folk,
Sometime when nae ane see'd him,
An' try't that night.

He marches thro' amang the stacks,
Tho' he was something sturtin:[5]
The graip[6] he for a harrow taks,
An' haurls[7] at his curpin:[8]
An' ev'ry now an' then, he says,
"Hemp-seed, I saw thee,
An' her that is to be my lass,
Come after me, an' draw thee
As fast this night."

[1] Delirious. [2] Harvest.
[3] Sherriff-moor, the battle fought in the Rebellion, 1715.
[4] A romping girl.
[5] Frightened. [6] Stable fork. [7] Drags. [8] Crupper.

He whistl'd up Lord Lenox' march,
To keep his courage cheary;
Altho' his hair began to arch,
He was sae fley'd[1] an' eerie:
Till presently he hears a squeak,
An' then a grane an' gruntle;
He, by his shouther gae a keek,[2]
An' tumbl'd wi' a wintle[3]
Out-owre that night.

He roar'd a horrid murder-shout,
In dreadfu' desperation!
An' young an' auld came rinnin out,
An' hear the sad narration:
He swoor 'twas hilchin[4] Jean M'Craw,
Or crouchie[5] Merran Humphie,
Till stop! she trotted thro' them a':
An' wha was it but Grumphie
Asteer[6] that night!

Meg fain wad to the barn hae gaen
To winn three wechts o' naething;[7]
But for to meet the Deil her lane,
She put her little faith in:
She gies the herd a pickle nits,
And twa red-cheekit apples,
To watch, while for the barn she sets,
In hopes to see Tam Kipples,
That vera night.

[1] Scared. [2] A peep. [3] Stagger. [4] Halting.
[5] Crook-backed. [6] Abroad.

[7] This charm must likewise be performed unperceived, and alone. You go to the barn, and open both doors, taking them off the hinges, if possible; for there is danger, that the *being*, about to appear, may, shut the doors and do you some mischief. Then take that instrument used in winnowing the corn, which, in our country dialect, we call a wecht; and go through all the attitudes of letting down corn against the wind. Repeat it three times; and the third time an apparition will pass through the barn, in at the windy door, and out at the other, having both the figure in question, and the appearance or retinue, marking the employment or station in life.—R.B.

She turns the key, wi' cannie thraw,
An' owre the threshold ventures:
But first on Sawnie gies a ca',
Syne bauldly in she enters;
A ratton[1] rattl'd up the wa',
An' she cry'd, —— preserve her!
An' ran thro' midden-hole[2] an' a',
An' pray'd wi' zeal an' fervour,
Fu' fast that night.

They hoy't[3] out Will, wi' sair advice;
They hecht[4] him some fine braw ane;
It chanc'd the stack he faddom't[5] thrice[6]
Was timmer[7]-propt from thrawin:
He taks a swirlie,[8] auld moss-oak,
For some black grousome Carlin;
An' loot a winze, an' drew a stroke,
Till skin in blypes[9] cam haurlin
Aff's nieves[10] that night.

A wanton widow Leezie was,
As cantie[11] as a kittlen;
But, Och! that night among the shaws,[12]
She got a fearfu' settlin!
She thro' the wins, an' by the cairn,
An' owre the hill gaed scrievin,
Whare three lairds' lands met at a burn,[13]
To dip her left sark-sleeve in,
Was bent that night.

[1] Rat [2] Gutter at the bottom of a dung-hill.
[3] Urged. [4] Foretold. [5] Fathomed.
[6] Take an opportunity of going, unnoticed to a bean-stack, and fathom it three times round. The last fathom of the last time you will catch in your arms the appearance of your future conjugal yoke-fellow.—R.B. [7] Timber. [8] Knotty.
[9] Shreds. [10] Fists. [11] Merry. [12] Woods.
[13] You go out, one or more, (for this is a social spell,) to a south running spring or rivulet, where "three lairds' lands meet," and dip your left shirt sleeve. Go to bed in sight of a fire, and hang your wet sleeve before it to dry. Lie awake; and some time near midnight, an apparition, having the exact figure of the grand object in question, will come and turn the sleeve, as if to dry the other side of it.—R.B.

Whyles owre a linn the burnie plays,
As thro' the glen it whimpl't:
Whyles round a rocky scar it strays;
Whyles in a wiel[1] it dimpl't;
Whyles glitter'd to the nightly rays,
Wi' bickering, dancing dazzle;
Whyles cookit[2] underneath the braes,
Below the spreading hazel,
Unseen that night.

Amang the brachens,[3] on the brae,
Between her an' the moon,
The Deil, or else an outler Quey,
Gat up an' gae a croon:[4]
Poor Leezie's heart maist lap the hool:[5]
Near lav'rock-height she jumpit,
But mist a fit, an' in the pool
Out-owre the lugs[6] she plumpit,
Wi' a plunge that night.

In order, on the clean hearth-stane,
The luggies[7] three are ranged;
And ev'ry time great care is ta'en,
To see them duly changed:
Auld uncle John, wha wedlock's joys
Sin Mar's-year[8] did desire,
Because he gat the toom[9] dish thrice,
He heaved them on the fire
In wrath that night.

[1] Small whirlpool or eddy. [2] Glided.
[3] Fern. [4] A deep moan. [5] Sheath. [6] Ears.
[7] Take three dishes; put clean water in one, foul water in another, leave the third empty: blindfold a person, and lead him to the hearth where the dishes are ranged; he (or she) dips the left hand: if by chance in the clean water, the future husband or wife will come to the bar of matrimony, a maid: if in the foul, a widow: if in the empty dish, it foretells with equal certainty, no marriage at all. It is repeated three times; and every time the arrangement of the dishes is altered.—R. B.
[8] 1715. [9] Empty.

Wi' merry sangs, an friendly cracks,
I wat they did na weary;
And unco tales, an' funnie jokes,
Their sports were cheap an' cheary;
Till butter'd So'ns[1], wi' fragrant lunt,[2]
Set a' their gabs[3] a steerin;[4]
Syne, wi' a social glass o' strunt,[5]
They parted aff careerin[6]
Fu' blythe that night.

[1] Sowens, with butter instead of milk to them, is always the Halloween Supper.—R. B. *Sowens* is a kind of oatmeal pudding.
[2] Smoke. [3] Mouths. [4] A-stirring.
[5] Spirituous liquor of any kind. [6] Cheerfully.
Most of these practices are now discontinued. Ducking for apples in a tub of water or in a basin of flour with nut-burning, and a few others not causing superstitious dread still afford amusement.

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.

A DIRGE.

Burns thought that a man seeking work was a very distressing view of life, and he aimed to embody that sentiment in this poem. Southey in "The Doctor" has these remarks upon it.—

"I had an old grand-uncle" says Burns "with whom my mother lived awhile in her girlish years. The good man was long blind ere he died, during which time his highest enjoyment was to sit down and cry, while my mother would sing the simple old song of the 'Life and Age of Man.'"

"It is certain that this old song was in Burns' mind when he composed to the same cadence those well known stanzas of which the burthen is that 'Man was made to Mourn.' But the old blind man's tears were tears of piety, not of regret; it was his greatest enjoyment thus to listen and to weep; and his heart the while was not so much in the past as his hopes were in the future. They were patient hopes; he knew in whom he believed, and was awaiting his deliverance in God's good time—"'Sunt homines qui cum patientiâ moriuntur; sunt autem quidam perfecti qui cum patientiâ vivunt." (St. Augustin). Burns may perhaps have been conscious in his better hours (and he had many such) that he had inherited the

feeling (if not the sober piety) which is so touchingly exemplified in this family anecdote;—that it was the main ingredient in the Athanasia of his own incomparable effusions, and that without it he never could have been the moral, and therefore never the truly great poet that he eminently is."—*Southey's Doctor.*

WHEN chill November's surly blast
Made fields and forests bare,
One evening, as I wandered forth
Along the banks of Ayr,
I spied a man, whose aged step
Seemed weary, worn with care;
His face was furrowed o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair.

"Young stranger, whither wanderest thou?"
Began the reverend sage;
"Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful pleasure's rage?
Or, haply, pressed with cares and woes,
Too soon thou hast began
To wander forth with me to mourn
The miseries of man!

"The sun that overhangs yon moors,
Out-spreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labour to support
A haughty lordling's pride;
I've seen yon weary winter sun
Twice forty times return;
And every time has added proofs
That man was made to mourn.

"O man! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time!
Misspending all thy precious hours,
Thy glorious youthful prime!
Alternate follies take the sway,
Licentious passions burn;
Which tenfold force gives Nature's law,
That man was made to mourn.

"Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood's active might;
Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right;
But see him on the edge of life,
With cares and sorrows worn,
Then age and want—oh, ill-matched pair!—
Show man was made to mourn.

"A few seem favourites of fate,
In Pleasure's lap caressed;
Yet, think not all the rich and great
Are likewise truly blest.
But, oh! what crowds in every land,
Are wretched and forlorn!
Through weary life this lesson learn,
That man was made to mourn.

"Many and sharp the num'rous ills
Inwoven with our frame:
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame!
And man, whose heaven-erected face
The smiles of love adorn,
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn!

"See yonder poor, o'erlaboured wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil;
And see his lordly fellow-worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, though a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn.

"If I 'm designed yon lordling's slave
By Nature's law designed,
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind?

If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty or scorn?
Or why has man the will and power
To make his fellow mourn?

"Yet let not this too much, my son,
Disturb thy youthful breast:
This partial view of humankind
Is surely not the best!
The poor, oppressèd, honest man,
Had never, sure, been born,
Had there not been some recompense
To comfort those that mourn.

"O Death! the poor man's dearest friend—
The kindest and the best!
Welcome the hour my agèd limbs
Are laid with thee at rest!
The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn;
But, oh! a blest relief to those
That, weary-laden, mourn!"

To the high praise already mentioned as having been given by other Poets and critics to "The Cotter's Saturday Night," may be added that of the correct and careful Poet Rogers, who said that it was "The finest Pastoral in any language." The quotation from Gray is not prefixed to the copy in manuscript sent to my grandfather in my possession.—P.F.A.

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT.

[Inscribed to ROBERT AIKEN, Esq.]

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short but simple annals of the poor.

GRAY.

My loved, my honoured, much respected friend!
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride I scorn each selfish end:

My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise:
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequestered scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been:
Ah! though his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween.

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;[1]
The shortening winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
The blackening trains o' craws to their repose:
The toil-worn Cotter frae his labour goes,
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
The expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher[2] through
To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin noise an' glee.
His wee bit ingle,[3] blinking bonnily,
His clean hearthstane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his toil.

Belyve[4] the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun;'
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie[5] rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame, perhaps, to shew a braw new gown,'
Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

[1] Moan. [2] Stagger. [3] Fire, or fireplace. [4] By and by. [5] Careful.

Wi' joy unfeigned brothers and sisters meet,
An' each for other's weelfare kindly speers:[1]
The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet;
Each tells the uncos[2] that he sees or hears:
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother, wi' her needle an' her shears,
Gars[3] auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their masters' an' their mistresses' command,
The younkers a' are warnèd to obey;
An' mind their labours wi' an eydent[4] hand,
An' ne'er, though out o' sight, to jauk or play:
"An' O! be sure to fear the Lord alway!
An' mind your duty duly, morn an' night!
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright!'

But hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad cam' o'er the moor,
To do some errands and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck, anxious care, inquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins[5] is afraid to speak:
Weel pleased the mother hears its nae wild, worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome Jenny brings him bèn,[6]
A strappan youth; he taks the mother's eye;
Blithe Jenny sees the visit's no ill ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye:[7]
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows with joy.
But blate[8] and laithfu',[9] scarce can weel behave;

[1] Enquires. [2] News. [3] Makes.
[4] Diligent. [5] Half. [6] In.
[7] Cows. [8] Bashful. [9] Sheepish.

The mother wi' a woman's wiles can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave;
Weel pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.[1]

O happy love! where love like this is found!
O heartfelt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I 've pacèd much this weary mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare—
"If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale."

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart—
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjured arts! dissembling smooth!
Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exiled?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruined maid, and their distraction wild?

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The halesome parritch,[2] chief o' Scotia's food:
The soupe their only Hawkie[3] does afford,
That 'yont the hallan[4] snugly chows her cood:[5]
The dame brings forth in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hained[6] kebbuck,[7] fell,
An' aft he's prest, an' aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell,
How 'twas a towmond[8] auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.[9]

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They round the ingle form a circle wide;

[1] Rest. [2] Porridge [3] A white-faced cow.
[4] Wall. [5] Chews her cud. [6] Saved.
[7] Cheese. [8] Twelvemonth. [9] Flax was in flower.

The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride:
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets[1] wearing thin an' bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales[2] a portion with judicious care;
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim:
Perhaps "Dundee's" wild, warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive "Martyrs" worthy of the name:
Or noble "Elgin" beets the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or, Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay his head:
How his first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:
How he, who lone in Patmos banished,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand;
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

[1] Grey locks. [2] Chooses.

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing," [1]
That thus they all shall meet in future days:
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul;
And in His book of life the inmates poor enrol.

Then homeward all take off their several way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request
That He who stills the raven's clamorous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flowery pride,
Would, in the way his wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad:
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
"An honest man's the noblest work of God:" [2]
And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind;
What is a lordling's pomp! a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

[1] Pope's "Windsor Forest." [2] Pope's "Essay on Man."

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent!
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
And, O! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From Luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved Isle.

O Thou! who poured the patriotic tide
That streamed through Wallace's undaunted heart;
Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God, peculiarly thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
O never, never, Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot, and the patriot bard,
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL.

[Burns told his brother it was suggested to him by the many ludicrous accounts we have of this august personage.]

Oh Prince! Oh Chief of many throned Pow'rs,
That led th' embattled Seraphim to war— *Milton.*

O THOU! whatever title suit thee,
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie,
Wha in yon cavern grim an' sootie,
Closed under hatches,
Spairges[1] about the brunstane cootie,[2]
To scaud poor wretches.

Hear me, auld Hangie, for a wee,
An let poor damned bodies be;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
Ev'n to a deil,
To skelp[3] an' scaud poor dogs like me,
An' hear us squeel!

[1] Dashest. [2] Pail. [3] Strike.

Great is thy pow'r, an' great thy fame;
Far ken'd an' noted is thy name;
An', tho' yon lowin heugh's[1] thy hame,
Thou travels far;
An', faith! thou's neither lag nor lame,
Nor blate nor scaur.[2]

Whyles, ranging like a roarin lion,
For prey a' holes an' corners tryin;
Whyles on the strong-wing'd tempest flyin,
Tirlin[3] the kirks;
Whyles in the human bosom pryin,
Unseen thou lurks.

I've heard my reverend Grannie say,
In lanely glens ye like to stray;
Or where auld ruin'd castles, gray,
Nod to the moon,
Ye fright the nightly wand'rer's way,
Wi' eldritch croon.[4]

When twilight did my Grannie summon,
To say her pray'rs, douce, honest woman!
Aft yont the dyke she's heard you bummin,
Wi' eerie drone;
Or, rustlin, thro' the boortries[5] comin,
Wi' heavy groan.

Ae dreary, windy, winter night,
The stars shot down wi' sklentin[6] light,
Wi' you, mysel, I gat a fright,
Ayont the lough;
Ye, like a rash-bush,[7] stood in sight,
Wi' waving sugh.

[1] Flaming pit. [2] Neither bashful nor fearful. [3] Unroofing.
[4] Horrid moan. [5] Elder bushes. [6] Slanting.
[7] Bush of rushes.

The cudgel in my nieve[1] did shake,
Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake,
When wi' an eldritch stoor,[2] quaick, quaick,
Amang the springs,
Awa ye squatter, like a drake,
On whistling wings.

Let warlocks[3] grim, an' wither'd hags,
Tell how wi' you on ragweed nags,
They skim the muirs, an' dizzy crags,
Wi' wicked speed;
And in kirk-yards renew their leagues,
Owre howkit[4] dead.

Thence, countra wives, wi' toil an' pain,
May plunge an' plunge the kirn[5] in vain;
For, Oh! the yellow treasure's taen
By witching skill;
An' dawtit,[6] twal-pint[7] Hawkie's gaen
As yell's[8] the bill.[9]

Thence mystic knots mak' great abuse,
On young guidman, fond, keen, an crouse;[10]
When the best wark-lume i' the house,
By cantrip[11] wit,
Is instant made no worth a louse,
Just at the bit.

When thowes[12] dissolve the snawy hoord,
An' float the jingling icy-boord,
Then water-kelpies haunt the foord
By your direction,
An' 'nighted trav'llers are allured
To their destruction.

[1] Fist. [2] Hoarse. [3] Wizards. [4] Digged up. [5] Churn.
[6] Petted. [7] Twelve-pint. [8] Without milk. [9] Bull.
[10] Courageous. [11] Magic. [12] Thaws

An' aft your moss-traversing Spunkies[1]
Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is:
The bleezing, curst, mischievous monkeys
Delude his eyes,
Till in some miry slough he sunk is,
Ne'er mair to rise.

When Masons' mystic word an' grip,
In storms an' tempests raise you up,
Some cock or cat your rage maun stop,
Or, strange to tell!
The youngest Brother ye wad whip
Aff straught to hell!

Lang syne, in Eden's bonnie yard,
When youthfu' lovers first were paired,
An' all the soul of love they shared,
The raptured hour,
Sweet on the fragant, flowery swaird,
In shady bower:[2]

Then you, ye auld, snick-drawing[3] dog;
Ye came to Paradise *incog.*,
An' played on man a cursèd brogue,[4]
(Black be your fa'!)
An' gied the infant warld a shog,[5]
'Maist ruined a'.

D'ye mind that day, when in a bizz,[6]
Wi' reekit duds,[7] an' reestit gizz,[8]

[1] Wills-o'-the-Wisp.

[2] The third stanza was originally

Lang syne in Eden's happy scene,
When strappin' Adam's days were green,
And Eve was like my bonnie Jean,
My dearest part,
A dancin', sweet, young, handsome quean
Wi' guileless heart.

[3] Latch breaking. [4] Trick. [5] Shake. [6] Hurry.
[7] Smoky clothes. [8] Singed hair.

Ye did present your smoutie phiz
'Mang better fo'k,
An' sklented[1] on the man of Uz
Your spitefu' joke?

An how ye gat him i' your thrall,
An' brak him out o' house and hall,
While scabs an' blotches did him gall,
Wi' bitter claw,
An' lowsed his ill-tongued, wicked Scawl,[2]
Was warst ava?

But a' your doings to rehearse,
Your wily snares an' fechtin' fierce,
Sin' that day Michael[3] did you pierce,
Down to this time,
Wad ding a Lallan[4] tongue, or Erse,
In prose or rhyme.

An' now, auld Cloots, I ken ye're thinkin',
A certain Bardie's rantin', drinkin',
Some luckless hour will send him linkin'
To your black pit;
But, faith! he'll turn a corner jinkin',[5]
An' cheat you yet.

But, fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben!
Oh, wad ye tak'a thought an' men'![6]
Ye aiblins[7] might—I dinna ken—
Still hae a stake—
I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
Ev'n for your sake!

[1] Darted. [2] Scold (his wife). [3] *Vide* MILTON, Book vi
[4] Lowland. [5] Dodging. [6] Mend. [7] Perhaps.

THE VISION.

DUAN FIRST.[1]

THE sun had closed the winter day,
The Curlers[2] quat their roaring play,
An' hungered maukin[3] te'en her way
To kail-yards green,
While faithless snaws ilk step betray
Whare she has been.

The thresher's weary flingin-tree
The lee-lang day had tirèd me:
And whan the day had closed his e'e,
Far i' the west,
Ben i' the spence,[4] right pensivelie,
I gaed to rest.

There, lanely, by the ingle-cheek,[5]
I sat and eyed the spewing reek,
That filled, wi' hoast provoking smeek,
The auld clay biggin';[6]
An' heard the restless rattons squeak
About the riggin.

All in this mottie, misty clime,
I backward mused on wasted time,
How I had spent my youthfu' prime,
An' done nae-thing.
But stringin' blethers[7] up in rhyme,
For fools to sing.

Had I to guid advice but harkit,
I might, by this, hae led a market,

[1] Duan, a term of Ossian's for the different divisions of a digressive poem. See his "Cath-Loda." Vol. ii. of M'Pherson's translation. —BURNS.

[2] Curling is a game played with stones on the ice; curlers, the players at it.

[3] A hare. [4] Parlour. [5] Chimney-corner. [6] House. [7] Nonsense.

Or strutted in a bank, an' clarkit
My cash account:
While here, half-mad, half-fed, half-sarkit,[1]
Is a' th' amount.

I started, muttering, blockhead! coof![2]
And heaved on high my waukit loof,[3]
To swear by a' yon starry roof,
Or some rash aith,
That I, henceforth, would be rhyme-proof
Till my last breath—

When click! the string the snick[4] did draw;
And, jee! the door gaed to the wa';
An' by my ingle-lowe[5] I saw,
No bleezin bright,
A tight, outlandish hizzie, braw,
Come full in sight.

Ye need na doubt, I held my whist;[6]
The infant aith, half-formed, was crusht;
I glowered as eerie's I'd been dusht[7]
In some wild glen;
When sweet, like modest worth, she blusht
And steppèd ben.

Green, slender, leaf-clad holly boughs
Were twisted, gracefu', round her brows;
I took her for some Scottish Muse,
By that same token;
An' come to stop those reckless vows,
Wou'd soon been broken.

A "hair-brained, sentimental trace,"
Was strongly markèd in her face;
A wildly witty, rustic grace
Shone full upon her;
Her eye, ev'n turned on empty space,
Beamed keen with Honour

[1] Clothed—sark is a shirt. [2] Ninny. [3] Hard palm. [4] Latch.
[5] Firelight. [6] Silence. [7] Pushed by an ox.

Down flowed her robe, a tartan sheen,
Till half a leg was scrimply seen;
And such a leg! my bonnie Jean
Could only peer it;
Sae straught, sae taper, tight, and clean,
Nane else came near it.

Her mantle large, of greenish hue,
My gazing wonder chiefly drew;
Deep lights and shades, bold-mingling, threw
A lustre grand;
And seemed, to my astonished view,
A well-known land.

Here, rivers in the sea were lost;
There, mountains to the skies were tost:
Here, tumbling billows marked the coast
With surging foam;
There, distant shone Art's lofty boast,
The lordly dome.

Here, Doon poured down his far-fetched floods;
There, well-fed Irwine stately thuds:[1]
Auld hermit Ayr staw[2] through his woods,
On to the shore;
And many a lesser torrent scuds,
With seeming roar.

Low, in a sandy valley spread,
An ancient borough[3] reared her head;
Still, as in Scottish story read,
She boasts a race
To every nobler virtue bred,
And polished grace.

By stately tower or palace fair,
Or ruins pendent in the air,
Bold stems of heroes, here and there,
I could discern;

[1] Sounds. [2] Stole. [3] Ayr.

Some seemed to muse, some seemed to dare,
With feature stern.

My heart did glowing transport feel,
To see a race [1] heroic wheel,
And brandish round the deep-dyed steel
In sturdy blows;
While back-recoiling seem to reel
Their southron foes.

His COUNTRY'S SAVIOUR,[2] mark him well!
Bold Richardton's[3] heroic swell;
The chief on Sark,[4] who glorious fell,
In high command;
And he whom ruthless fates expel
His native land.

There, where a sceptred Pictish shade[5]
Stalked round his ashes lowly laid,
I marked a martial race, pourtrayed
In colours strong;
Bold, soldier-featured, undismayed
They strode along.

Through many a wild romantic grove,[6]
Near many a hermit-fancied cove,
(Fit haunts for friendship or for love,)
In musing mood,
An aged Judge, I saw him rove,
Dispensing good.

[1] The Wallaces.—BURNS. [2] William Wallace.—BURNS.

[3] Adam Wallace, of Richardton, cousin to the immortal preserver of Scottish independence.—BURNS.

[4] Wallace, Laird of Craigie, who was second in command, under Douglas, Earl of Ormond, at the famous battle on the banks of Sark, fought anno 1448. That glorious victory was principally owing to the judicious conduct and intrepid valour of the gallant Laird of Craigie, who died of his wounds after the action.—BURNS.

[5] Coilus, king of the Picts, from whom the district of Kyle is said to take its name, lies buried, as tradition says, near the family seat of the Montgomeries of Coils-field, where his burial-place is still shown.—BURNS.

[6] Barskimming, the seat of the late Lord Justice Clerk.

With deep-struck reverential awe,
The learnèd sire and son[1] I saw,
To Nature's God and Nature's law
They gave their lore,
This, all its source and end to draw,
That to adore.

Brydone's brave ward[2] I well could spy,
Beneath old Scotia's smiling eye;
Who called on fame, low standing by,
To hand him on,
Where many a patriot-name on high,
And hero shone.

DUAN SECOND.

With musing deep, astonished stare,
I viewed the heavenly seeming fair;
A whisp'ring throb did witness bear,
Of kindred sweet.
When with an elder sister's air
She did me greet

"All hail my own inspirèd bard!
In me thy native Muse regard!
Nor longer mourn thy fate is hard,
Thus poorly low!
I come to give thee such reward
As we bestow.

"Know, the great genius of this land
Has many a light aërial band,
Who, all beneath his high command,
Harmoniously,
As arts or arms they understand,
Their labours ply.

[1] Dr. Stewart and his son (the celebrated Dugald Stewart); they lived at Catrine.
[2] Col Fullarton.

"They Scotia's race among them share;
Some fire the soldier on to dare;
Some rouse the patriot up to bare
Corruption's heart:
Some teach the bard, a darling care,
The tuneful art.

"'Mong swelling floods of reeking gore,
They, ardent, kindling spirits pour;
Or, 'mid the venal senate's roar,
They sightless stand,
To mend the honest patriot-lore,
And grace the hand.

"And when the bard, or hoary sage,
Charm or instruct the future age,
They bind the wild poetic rage
In energy,
Or point the inconclusive page
Full on the eye.

"Hence Fullarton, the brave and young;
Hence Dempster's zeal-inspirèd tongue;
Hence sweet harmonious Beattie sung
His 'Minstrel Lays;'
Or tore, with noble ardour stung,
The sceptic's bays.

"To lower orders are assigned
The humbler ranks of Humankind,
The rustic bard, the lab'ring hind,
The artisan;
All choose, as various they're inclined,
The various man.

"When yellow waves the heavy grain,
The threatening storm some strongly rein;
Some teach to meliorate the plain,
With tillage skill;
And some instruct the shepherd train,
Blithe o'er the hill.

"Some hint the lover's harmless wile;
Some grace the maiden's artless smile;
Some soothe the lab'rer's weary toil,
For humble gains,
And make his cottage-scenes beguile,
His cares and pains.

"Some bounded to a district space,
Explore at large man's infant race,
To mark the embryotic trace
Of rustic bard;
And careful note each opening grace,
A guide and guard.

"Of these am I—Coila my name;
And this district as mine I claim,
Where once the Campbells, chiefs of fame,
Held ruling power:
I marked thy embryo tuneful flame,
Thy natal hour.

"With future hope I oft would gaze
Fond, on thy little early ways,
Thy rudely carolled, chiming phrase,
In uncouth rhymes,
Fired at the simple, artless lays
Of other times.

"I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar;
Or when the North his fleecy store
Drove through the sky,
I saw grim Nature's visage hoar
Struck thy young eye.

"Or when the deep green-mantled earth
Warm cherished every floweret's birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In every grove,

I saw thee eye the general mirth
With boundless love.

"When ripened fields, and azure skies,
Called forth the reaper's rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their evening joys,
And lonely stalk,
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise
In pensive walk.

"When youthful love, warm-blushing, strong,
Keen-shivering shot thy nerves along,
Those accents, grateful to thy tongue,
Th' adorèd Name,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
To soothe thy flame.

"I saw thy pulse's maddening play,
Wild send thee Pleasure's devious way,
Misled by Fancy's meteor ray,
By Passion driven;
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from Heaven.

"I taught thy manners painting strains,
The loves, the ways, of simple swains,
Till now, o'er all my wide domains
Thy fame extends;
And some, the pride of Coila's plains,
Become thy friends.

"Thou canst not learn, nor can I show,
To paint with Thomson's landscape glow;
Or wake the bosom-melting throe
With Shenstone's art;
Or pour, with Gray, the moving flow
Warm on the heart.

"Yet all beneath th' unrivalled rose,
The lowly daisy sweetly blows:
Though large the forest's monarch throws
His army shade,
Yet green the juicy hawthorn grows
Adown the glade.

"Then never murmur or repine;
Strive in thy humble sphere to shine;
And trust me, not Potosi's mine,
Nor kings' regard,
Can give a bliss o'ermatching thine,
A rustic Bard.

"To give my counsels all in one—
Thy tuneful flame still careful fan;
Preserve the Dignity of Man,
With soul erect;
And trust the Universal Plan
Will all protect.

"And wear thou this"—she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head:
The polished leaves, and berries red,
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away.

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH.[1]

"Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul!
Sweet'ner of life, and solder of society!
I owe thee much!—BLAIR.

DEAR Smith, the sleest, paukie[2] thief,
That e'er attempted stealth or rief,

[1] James Smith was a merchant at Mauchline, and an early friend of Burns.

[2] Cunning.

Ye surely ha'e some warlock-breef,
Owre human hearts;
For ne'er a bosom yet was prief[1]
Against your arts.

For me, I swear by sun an' moon,
And every star that blinks aboon,
Ye've cost me twenty pair of shoon
Just gaun to see you;
And every ither pair that's done,
Mair ta'en I'm wi' you.

That auld capricious carlin, Nature,
To mak' amends for scrimpit stature,
She's turned you aff, a human creature
On her first plan;
And in her freaks, on every feature
She's wrote, "The Man."

Just now I've ta'en the fit o' rhyme,
My barmie noddle's working prime,
My fancy yerkit up sublime
Wi' hasty summon:
Ha'e ye a leisure moment's time
To hear what's comin'?

Some rhyme a neibor's name to lash;
Some rhyme (vain thought!) for needfu' cash;
Some rhyme to court the countra clash,
An' raise a din;
For me, an aim I never fash;
I rhyme for fun.

The star that rules my luckless lot,
Has fated me the russet coat;
An' damned my fortune to the groat;
But in requit,
Has blest me wi' a random shot
O' countra wit.

[1] Proof.

This while my notion's ta'en a sklent,[1]
To try my fate in guid black prent;
But still the mair I'm that way bent,
Something cries "Hoolie!"
I rede you, honest man, tak' tent![2]
Ye'll shaw your folly.

"There's ither poets much your betters,
Far seen in Greek, deep-men o' letters,
Ha'e thought they had ensured their debtors,
A' future ages;
Now moths deform in shapeless tatters
Their unknown pages."

Then fareweel hopes o' laurel-boughs,
To garland my poetic brows!
Henceforth Ill rove where busy ploughs
Are whistling thrang,
An' teach the lanely heights an' howes
My rustic sang.

I'll wander on, with tentless[3] heed
How never-halting moments speed,
Till fate shall snap the brittle thread;
Then, all unknown,
I'll lay me with th' inglorious dead,
Forgot and gone!

But why o' death begin a tale?
Just now we're living sound and hale,
Then top and maintop crowd the sail,
Heave care owre side!
And large before enjoyment's gale,
Let's tak' the tide.

This life, sae far's I understand,
Is a' enchanted fairy-land,
Where pleasure is the magic wand
That, wielded right,
Mak's hours like minutes, hand in hand,
Dance by fu' light.

[1] Slant. [2] Care. [3] Careless.

The magic wand, then, let us wield;
For, ance that-five-an'-forty's speeled,
See crazy, weary, joyless eld,
Wi' wrinkled face,
Comes hostin, hirplin', ower the field,
Wi' creeping pace.

When ance life's day draws near the gloaming',
Then fareweel vacant, careless roaming';
An' fareweel cheerfu' tankards foamin',
An' social noise;
An' fareweel dear, deluding woman,
The joy of joys!

O Life! how pleasant is thy morning,
Young Fancy's rays the hills adorning!
Cold-passing Caution's lesson scorning,
We frisk away,
Like schoolboys, at th' expected warning,
To joy and play.

We wander there, we wander here,
We eye the rose upon the brier,
Unmindful that the thorn is near,
Among the leaves;
And though the puny wound appear,
Short while it grieves.

Some, lucky, find a flowery spot,
For which they never toiled nor swat;
They drink the sweet and eat the fat,
[1] But care or pain;
And, haply, eye the barren hut
With high disdain.

With steady aim some Fortune chase;
Keen hope does every sinew brace;
Through fair, through foul, they urge the race,
And seize the prey;
Then cannie, in some cozie place,
They close the day.

[1] Without,

And others, like your humble servan',
Poor wights! nae rules nor roads observin';
To right or left eternal swervin',
They zig-zag on;
'Till curst with age, obscure and starvin',
They aften groan.

Alas! what bitter toil an' straining—
But truce with peevish, poor complaining!
Is Fortune's fickle Luna waning?
E'en let her gang!
Beneath what light she has remaining
Let's sing our sang.

My pen I here fling to the door,
And kneel, "Ye Powers!" and warm implore,
"Though I should wander Terra o'er,
In all her climes,
Grant me but this, I ask no more.
A rowth [1] o' rhymes.

Gi'e dreeping roasts to countra lairds,
Till icicles hing frae their beards:
Gie fine braw claes to fine life-guards
And maids of honour:
And yill an' whiskey gi'e to cairds [2]
Until they sconner.[3]

"A title, Dempster merits it;
A garter gi'e to Willie Pitt;
Gi'e wealth to some be-ledgered cit,
In cent per cent.;
But gi'e me real, sterling wit,
And I'm content.

[1] Plenty. [2] Tinkers. [3] Loath it.

"While ye are pleased to keep me hale,
I'll sit down o'er my scanty meal,
Be't water-brose, or muslin kail,[1]
Wi' cheerful face,
As lang's the Muses dinna fail
To say the grace."

An anxious e'e I never throws
Behint my lug, or by my nose;
I jouk[2] beneath misfortune's blows
As weel's I may;
Sworn foe to sorrow, care, and prose,
I'll rhyme away.

Oh ye douce folk, that live by rule,
Grave, tideless-blooded, calm and cool,
Compared wi' you—oh, fool, fool, fool!
How much unlike!
Your hearts are just a standing pool,
Your lives a dyke!

Nae hare-brained, sentimental traces,
In your unlettered, nameless faces;
In *arioso* trills and graces
Ye never stray,
But, *gravissimo*, solemn basses.
Ye hum away.

Ye are sae grave, nae doubt ye're wise;
Nae ferly[3] though ye do despise
The hairum-scairum, ram-stam boys,
The rattling squad:
I see you upward cast your eyes
Ye ken the road.

[1] Broth made without meat. [2] Stoop.
[3] Wonder.

Whilst I—but I shall haud me there—
Wi' you I'll scarce gang onywhere:
Then, Jamie, I shall say nae mair,
But quit my sang,
Content wi' you to mak' a pair,
Whare'er I gang.

A WINTER NIGHT.

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are.
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm!
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you,
From seasons such as these?—

Shakspere.

When biting Boreas, fell and doure,[1]
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r
When Phœbus gies a short-liv'd glow'r,
Far south the lift,[2]
Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r,
Or whirling drift:

Ae night the storm the steeples rocked,
Poor labour sweet in sleep was locked,
While burns wi' snawy wreeths[3] up-choked
Wild-eddying swirl,
Or through the mining outlet bocked,[4]
Down headlong hurl.

List'ning the doors and winnocks[5] rattle
I thought me on the ourie[6] cattle,
Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle
O' winter war,
And thro' the drift, deep-lairing,[7] sprattle,[8]
Beneath a scar.

[1] Sullen. [2] The sky. [3] Drifted heaps of snow. [4] Flung out.
[5] Windows. [6] Shivering. [7] Deep Wading. [8] Scramble.

Ilk happing[1] bird, wee helpless thing!
That, in the merry months o' spring,
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee?
Whare wilt thou cow'r thy chittering[2] wing,
An' close thy e'e?

Ev'n you on murd'ring errands toil'd,
Lone from your savage homes exil'd,
The blood-stain'd roost, and sheep-cote spoil'd,
My heart forgets,
While pitiless the tempest wild
Sore on you beats.

Now Phœbe in her midnight reign,
Dark muffl'd, view'd the dreary plain;
Still crowding thoughts, a pensive train,
Rose in my soul,
When on my ear this plaintiff strain,
Slow, solemn, stole—

"Blow, blow, ye winds, with heavier gust!
And freeze thou bitter-biting frost!
Descend, ye chilly, smothering snows!
Not all your rage, as now united, shows
More hard unkindness, unrelenting,
Vengeful malice, unrepenting,
Than heav'n-illumin'd man on brother man bestows
See stern Oppression's iron grip,
Or mad Ambition's gory hand,
Sending like blood-hounds from the slip,
Woe want and murder o'er a land!
Ev'n in the peaceful rural vale
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale,
How pamper'd Luxury, Flatt'ry by her side,
The parasite empoisoning her ear,
With all the servile wretches in the rear,
Looks o'er proud property, extended wide;

[1] Hopping. [2] Shivering

And eyes the simple rustic hind,
Whose toil upholds the glitt'ring show,
A creature of another kind,
Some coarser substance, unrefin'd
Plac'd for her lordly use thus far, thus vile below!
Where, where is love's fond tender throe,
With lordly Honour's lofty brow,
The pow'rs you proudly own?
Is there, beneath love's noble name,
Can harbour, dark, the selfish aim,
To bless himself alone!
Mark maiden-innocence a prey
To love-pretending snares,
This boasted Honour turns away,
Shunning soft pity's rising sway,
Regardless of the tears, and unavailing pray'rs!
Perhaps, this hour, in mis'ry's squalid nest
She strains your infant to her joyless breast,
And with a mother's fears shrinks at the rocking blast
Oh ye! who, sunk in beds of down,
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
Think for a moment, on his wretched fate,
Whom friends and fortune quite disown!
Ill-satisfied keen Nature's clam'rous call,
Stretched on his straw he lays himself to sleep.
While, through the ragged roof and chinky wall,
Chill o'er his slumbers piles the drifty heap!

Think on the dungeon's grim confine,
Where guilt and poor Misfortune pine!
Guilt, erring man, relenting view!
But shall thy legal rage pursue
The wretch already crushèd low
By cruel fortune's undeservèd blow?
Affliction's sons are brothers in distress,
A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss!

I heard nae mair, for chanticleer
Shook off the pouthery snaw,
And hailed the morning with a cheer,
A cottage rousing craw.

But deep this truth impressed my mind—
Through all His works abroad,
The heart, benevolent and kind,
The most resembles God.

THE AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION TO HIS AULD MARE MAGGIE,

ON GIVING HER THE ACCUSTOMED RIP OF CORN TO HANSEL IN THE NEW YEAR.

A GUID New Year I wish thee, Maggie!
Hae, there's a rip[1] to thy auld baggie:
Though thou's howe-backit now and knaggie,[2]
I've seen the day
Thou could hae gane like ony staggie
Out owre the lay.[3]

Though now thou's dowie,[4] stiff an' crazy,
An' thy auld hide's as white's a daisy,
I've seen thee dappl't, sleek and glaizie,
A bonny grey:
He should been tight that daur't to raize thee
Once in a day.

Thou ance was i' the foremost rank,
A filly buirdly, steeve, an' swank,[5]
An' set well down a shapely shank
As e'er tread yird;[6]
An' could hae flown out-ower a stank[7]
Like onie bird.

[1] A handful of corn in the stalks.
[2] Sunk in the back and sharp-boned
[3] Lea.
[4] Spiritless.
[5] Strong, active and stately.
[6] Earth
[7] Ditch or morass.

It's now some nine-an'-twenty year
Sin' thou was my guid father's meer;
He gied me thee, o' tocher[1] clear,
An' fifty mark;
Though it was sma', 'twas weel-won gear,
An' thou was stark.[2]

When first I gaed to woo my Jennie,
Ye then was trottin' wi' your minnie;[3]
Though ye was trickie, slee, and funnie,
Ye ne'er was donsie;[4]
But hamely, tawie, quiet and cannie,
An' unco sonsie.[5]

That day ye pranced wi' muckle pride,
When ye bure hame my bonnie bride:
An' sweet an' gracefu' she did ride,
Wi' maiden air!
Kyle Stewart I could braggèd[6] wide,
For sic a pair.

Though now ye dow but hoyte[7] and hobble,
An' wintle[8] like a saumont coble,[9]
That day ye was a jinker[10] noble,
For heels an win'!
An' ran them till they a' did wauble,[11]
Far, far behin'.

When thou an' I were young and skeigh,[12]
An' stable meals at fairs were dreigh,[13]
How thou wad prance, an' snore, an' skreigh,
An' tak' the road!
Town's bodies ran, an' stood abeigh,[14]
An ca't thee mad.

[1] Without payment. [2] Strong. [3] Mother.
[4] Mischevious. [5] Engaging. [6] Challenged.
[7] Limp. [8] Twist.
[9] A salmon boat. [10] Runner. [11] Stagger.
[12] Mettlesome. [13] Tedious [14] By, aside

When thou was corn't, an' I was mellow,
We took the road ay like a swallow:
At brooses [1] thou had ne'er a fellow
For pith and speed;
But every tail thou pay't them hollow,
Whare'er thou gaed.

The sma', droop-rumpl't,[2] hunter cattle,
Might aiblins [3] waur't thee for a brattle; [4]
But sax Scotch miles thou try't their mettle,
An' gar't them whaizle: [5]
Nae whip nor spur, but just a wattle [6]
O' saugh or hazel. [7]

Thou was a noble fittie-lan',[8]
As e'er in tug or tow was drawn!
Aft thee an' I, in aught hours gaun,
On guid March weather,
Hae turned sax rood beside our han',
For days thegither.

Thou never braindg't [9] an' fech't,[10] an' fliskit,[11]
But thy auld tail thou wad hae whiskit,
An' spread abreed thy well-filled briskit,
Wi' pith and power,
Till spritty knowes [12] wad rair't [13] and risket,[14]
An' slypet owre.[15]

[1] Wedding races.
[2] Sloping backed.
[3] Perhaps.
[4] Worse thee in a short race.
[5] Wheeze.
[6] A switch.
[7] Willow.
[8] The near horse of the hindmost pair at the plough.
[9] Plunged forward.
[10] Pulled by fits
[11] Fretted.
[12] Hillocks.
[13] Rent.
[14] Make a noise like the tearing of roots.
[15] Slip over

When frost lay lang, an' snaws were deep,
An' threatened labour back to keep,
I gied thy cog[1] a wee bit heap
Aboon the timmer;[2]
I ken'd my Maggie wad na sleep
For that or simmer.

In cart or car thou never reestit;
The steyest[3] brae thou wad hae fac't it;
Thou never lap, an' sten't and breastit,[4]
Then stood to blaw;
But just thy step a wee thing hastit,
Thou snoov't[5] awa'.

My pleugh is now thy bairn-time a';[6]
Four gallant brutes as e'er did draw;
Forbye sax mae, I've sell't awa,
That thou hast nurst:
They drew me thretteen pund an' twa,
The vera warst.

Monie a sair daurk[7] we twa hae wrought,
An' wi the weary warl' hae fought!
An monie an anxious day I thought
We wad be beat!
Yet here to crazy age we're brought,
Wi' something yet.

And think na, my auld trusty servan'
Than now perhaps thou's less deservin',
An' thy auld days may end in starvin'
For my last fow,[8]
A heapit stimpart,[9] I'll reserve ane
Laid by for you.

[1] Wooden measure [2] Timber. [3] Steepest.
[4] Leaped, reared, or started forward
[5] Went smoothly and constantly.
[6] My plough-team are all thy colts.
[7] Day's work [8] Bushel. [9] Eighth part of a bushel.

We've worn to crazy years thegether;
We'll toyte[1] about wi' ane anither;
Wi' tentie care I'll flit thy tether
To some hained rig,[2]
Where ye may nobly rax[3] your leather,
Wi' sma' fatigue,

THE TWA DOGS.

A TALE.

'TWAS in that place o' Scotland's isle,
That bears the name o' Auld King Coil,[4]
Upon a bonnie day in June,
When wearing thro' the afternoon,
Twa dogs, that were na thrang[5] at hame,
Forgather'd ance upon a time.

The first I'll name, they ca'd him Cæsar,
Was keepit for his Honor's pleasure:
His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,[6]
Shew'd he was nane o' Scotland's dogs;
But whalpit[7] some place far abroad,
Whare sailors gang to fish for Cod.

His locked, letter'd braw[8] brass collar,
Shew'd him the gentleman and scholar;
But though he was o' high degree,
The fient[9] a pride, na pride had he;
But wad hae spent an hour caressin,
Ev'n wi' a tinkler-gipsy's messin.[10]
At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,[11]
Nae tawted tyke,[12] tho' e'er sae duddie,
But he wad stan't, as glad to see him,
And stroan't on stanes and hillocks wi' him.

The tither was a ploughman's Collie,[13]
A rhyming, ranting, raving billie,[14]

[1] Move. [2] Spare rig. Stretch.
[4] A Pictish king, said to have given a name Kyle.
[5] Busy. [6] Ears. [7] Whelped. [8] Handsome.
[9] As respects. [10] A small dog. [11] Smithy.
[12] Dog with matted hair. [13] A country cur. [14] A brother.

Wha for his friend and comrade had him,
And in his freaks had Luath ca'd him,
After some dog in Highland sang,[1]
Was made lang syne,—Lord knows how lang.
He was a gash[2] an' faithfu' tyke,
As ever lap a sheugh[3] or dike.
His honest, sonsie, baws'nt[4] face,
Ay gat him friends in ilka place:
His breast was white, his towzie[5] back
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black;
His gawcie[6] tail, wi' upward curl,
Hung owre his hurdies[7] wi' a swirl.
Nae doubt but they were fain o' ither,
An' unco pack an' thick thegither;
Wi' social nose whyles snuff'd and snowkit;[8]
Whyles mice and moudieworts they howkit;[9]
Whyles scour'd awa in lang excursion,
An' worry'd ither in diversion;
Until wi' daffin weary grown,
Upon a knowe they sat them down,
An' there began a lang digression
About the lords o' the creation.

CÆSAR.

I've often wonder'd, honest Luath,
What sort o' life poor dogs like you have;
An' when the gentry's life I saw,
What way poor bodies liv'd ava.[10]
Our Laird gets in his racked rents,
His coals, his kain, an' a' his stents:[11]
He rises when he likes himsel;
His flunkies answer at the bell;
He ca's his coach; he ca's his horse;
He draws a bonnie, silken purse
As lang's my tail, whare thro 'the steeks,[12]

[1] Cuchullin's dog in "Ossian's Fingal."—R.B. [2] Wise. [3] A ditch. [4] White striped. [5] Rough. [6] Large. [7] Loins. [8] Scented. [9] Digged. [10] At all. [11] Dues of any kind. [12] Stitches.

The yellow letter'd Geordie keeks.[1]
Frae morn to e'en its nought but toiling,
At baking, roasting, frying, boiling;
An' tho' the gentry first are stechin,[2]
Yet ev'n the ha' folk fill their pechan[3]
Wi' sauce, ragouts, and such like trashtrie,
That's little short o' downright wastrie.
Our Whipper-in, wee blastit wonner[4],
Poor worthless elf, it eats a dinner,
Better than ony tenant man
His Honor has in a' the lan:
An' what poor cot-folk pit their painch[5] in,
I own it's past my comprehension.

LUATH.

Trowth, Cæsar, whyles they're fash't enough
A cotter howkin[6] in a sheugh,
Wi' dirty stanes biggin[7] a dyke,
Baring a quarry, and siclike,
Himsel, a wife, he thus sustains,
A smytrie[8] o' wee duddie[9] weans,[10]
An' nought but his han' darg,[11] to keep
Them right an' tight in thack an' rape.[12]
And when they meet wi' sair disasters,
Like loss o' health, or want o' masters
Ye maist wad think, a wee touch langer,
An' they maun starve o' cauld and hunger;
But, how it comes, I never kend yet,
They're maistly wonderfu' contented;
An' buirdly[13] chiels, an' clever hizzies,
Are bred in sic a way as this is.

CÆSAR.

But then to see how ye're negleckit,
How huff'd, an' cuff'd, an' disrespeckit!

[1] Peeps. [2] Eating freely. [3] Stomach. [4] Wonder.
Paunch. [6] Digging. [7] Building. [8] A number.
Ragged. [10] Children. [11] Labour. [12] Clothing necessaries.
[13] Stout grown.

Lord, man, our gentry care as little
For delvers, ditchers, an' sic cattle,
They gang as saucy by poor folk,
As I wad by a stinkin brock.[1]
I've notic'd on our Laird's court-day,
An' mony a time my heart's been wae,
Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,
How they maun thole[2] a factor's snash:[3]
He'll stamp an' threaten, curse and swear,[4]
He'll apprehend them, poind[5] their gear;
While they maun stan', wi' aspect humble,
An' hear it a', an fear and tremble!
I see how folk live that hae riches:
But surely poor folk maun be wretches.

LUATH.

They're no sae wretched's ane wad think
Tho' constantly on poortith's[6] brink:
They're sae accustom'd wi' the sight,
The view o't gies them little fright.
Then chance an' fortune are sae guided,
They're ay in less or mair provided;
An' tho' fatigu'd wi' close employment,
A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.
The dearest comfort o' their lives,
Their grushie[7] weans an' faithfu' wives:
The prattling things are just their pride,
That sweetens a' their fire-side.
An' whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy
Can mak the bodies unco happy;
They lay aside their private cares,
To mind the Kirk and State affairs:
They'll talk o' patronage and priests,
Wi' kindling fury i' their breasts,

[1] Badger. [2] Endure [3] Abuse.
[4] "My indignation yet boils at the recollection of the scoundrel factor's insolent threatening letters, which used to set us all in tears,"—R.B.
[5] Seize their goods. [6] Poverty. [7] Thriving.

Or tell what new taxation's comin,
And ferlie[1] at the folk in Lon'on.
As bleak-fac'd Hallowmass[2] returns,
They get the jovial, ranting Kirns,[3]
When rural life, o' ev'ry station,
Unite in common recreation;
Love blinks, Wit slaps, an' social Mirth
Forgets there's Care upo' the earth.
That merry day the year begins,
They bar the door on frosty wins;
The nappy[4] reeks wi' mantling ream,[5]
An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam;
The luntin[6] pipe, an sneeshin mill,[7]
Are handed round wi' right guid will;
The cantie[8] auld folks crackin crouse,[9]
The young anes ranting thro' the house,—
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barkit wi' them.
Still its owre true that ye hae said,
Sic game is now owre aften play'd.
There's monie a creditable stock
O' decent, honest fawsont[10] folk,
Are riven out baith root an' branch,
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench,
Wha thinks to knit himself the faster
In favour wi' some gentle Master,
Wha, aiblins,[11] thrang a parliamentin,
For Britain's guid his saul indentin—

CÆSAR.

Haith,[12] lad, ye little ken about it;
For Britain's guid! guid faith! I doubt it.
Say, rather, gaun as Premiers lead him,
An' saying aye or no's they bid him:
At operas an' plays parading,

[1] Wonder. [2] 31st October. [3] Harvest suppers. [4] Ale.
[5] Cream. [6] Smoking. [7] Snuff-box. [8] Cheerful.
[9] Conversing merrily. [10] Respectable. [11] Perhaps.
[12] A petty oath.

Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading:
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,[1]
To Hague or Calais taks a waft,
To make a tour, an' tak a whirl,
To learn *bon ton* an' see the worl'.
There, at Vienna or Versailles,
He rives his father's auld entails;
Or by Madrid he taks the rout,
To thrum guitars, an' fecht wi' nowt;[2]
For Britain's guid! for her destruction!
Wi' dissipation, feud, an' faction!

LUATH.

Hech,[3] man! dear sirs! is that the gate
They waste sae mony a braw estate!
Are we sae foughten an' harass'd
For fear to gang that gate at last?
O would they stay aback frae courts,
An' please themsels wi' countra sports,
It wad for ev'ry ane be better,
The Laird, the Tenant, an' the Cotter!
For thae frank, rantin, ramblin billies,
Fient haet[4] o' them's ill-hearted fellows;
Except for breakin o' their timmer,[5]
Or speakin lightly o' their Limmer,[6]
Or shootin o' a hare or moor-cock,
The ne'er-a-bit they're ill to poor folk.
But will ye tell me, Master Cæsar,
Sure great folk's life's a life o' pleasure?
Nae cauld nor hunger e'er can steer[7] them,
The vera thought o't need na fear them.

CÆSAR.

Lord, man, were ye but whyles whare I am,
The gentles ye wad ne'er envy 'em
It's true, they need na starve or sweat,
Thro' winter's cauld, or simmer's heat;

[1] Giddy. [2] Fight with bulls. [3] Oh—strange. [4] None.
[5] Timber. [6] A woman of ill character. [7] Molest.

They've nae sair wark to craze their banes,
An' fill auld age wi' grips an' granes:[1]
But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges and schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They mak enow themsels to vex them;
An' ay the less they hae to sturt[2] them,
In like proportion, less will hurt them.
A country fellow at the pleugh,
His acres till'd, he's right eneugh;
A country girl at her wheel,
Her dizzens[3] done, she's unco weel:
But Gentlemen, an' Ladies warst,
Wi' ev'n down want o' wark are curst.
They loiter, lounging, lank, an' lazy;
Tho' deil haet ails them, yet uneasy:
Their days insipid, dull, an' restless;
Their nights unquiet, lang, an' tasteless;
An' ev'n their sports, their balls an' races,
Their galloping thro' public places,
There's sic parade, sic pomp, an' art,
The joy can scarcely reach the heart.
The men cast out in party matches,
Then sowthers[4] a' in deep debauches.
The Ladies arm-in-arm in clusters,
As great an' gracious a' as sisters;
But hear their absent thoughts o' ither,
They're a run deils an jads thegither.[5]
Whyles, owre the wee bit cup an' platie,
They sip the scandal potion pretty;
Or lee-lang nights, wi' crabbit leuks,
Pore owre the devil's pictur'd beuks;
Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,
An' cheat like ony unhang'd blackguard.
There's some exception, man an' woman;
But this is Gentry's life in common.

[1] Groans. [2] Trouble. [3] Dozens.
[4] Cement. [5] Together.

By this, the sun was out of sight,
An' darker gloaming brought the night:
The bum-clock humm'd wi' lazy drone,
The kye[1] stood rowtin[2] i' the loan;
When up they gat, an' shook their lugs,
Rejoic'd they were na *men*, but *dogs*;
An' each took aff his several way,
Resolv'd to meet some ither day.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY,

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH, IN APRIL, 1786.[3]

WEE, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie Lark, companion meet!
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet!
Wi' spreckl'd breast.
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

[1] Cows. [2] Lowing.

[3] The Daisy grew in the field next to that in which the plough had turned up the mouse's nest.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods, and wa's maun shield,
But thou beneath the random bield[1]
O' clod, or stane,
Adorns the histie[2] stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless Maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soil'd, is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple Bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
By human pride or cunning driv'n
To mis'ry's brink,
Till, wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
He, ruin'd sink!

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrows' weight
Shall be thy doom.

[1] Shelter. [2] Dry.

TO RUIN.

ALL hail! inexorable lord!
At whose destruction-breathing word
The mightiest empires fall!
Thy cruel, woe-delighted train,
The ministers of grief and pain,
A sullen welcome, all!
With stern-resolved, despairing eye,
I see each aimèd dart;
For one has cut my dearest tie,
And quivers in my heart.
Then lowering and pouring,
The storm no more I dread;
Though thickening, and blackening,
Round my devoted head.

And thou grim power, by life abhorred,
While life a pleasure can afford,
Oh, hear a wretch's prayer!
No more I shrink appalled, afraid;
I court, I beg thy friendly aid,
To close this scene of care!
When shall my soul, in silent peace,
Resign life's joyless day;
My weary heart its throbbing cease,
Cold mould'ring in the clay?
No fear more, no tear more,
To stain my lifeless face;
Enclaspèd, and graspèd
Within thy cold embrace!

A DREAM.

"Thoughts, words, and deeds, the statute blames with reason;
But surely dreams were ne'er indicted treason?"

[On reading, in the public papers, the "Laureate's Ode," with the other parade of June 4, 1786, the Author was no sooner dropped asleep, than he imagined himself transported to the Birthday Levee, and, in his dreaming fancy, made the following address.—BURNS.]

GUID-MORNIN' to your Majesty!
May Heaven augment your blisses,
On every new birthday ye see,
A humble poet wishes!
My bardship here, at your levee,
On sic a day as this is,
Is sure an uncouth sight to see
Amang the birthday dresses,
Sae fine this day.

I see ye're complimented thrang,
By mony a lord and lady,
"God save the King!" 's a cuckoo sang
That's unco easy said aye;
The poets, too, a venal gang,
Wi' rhymes weel-turned and ready,
Wad gar[1] you trow ye ne'er do wrang,
But aye unerring steady,
On sic a day.

For me! before a monarch's face,
Ev'n there I winna flatter;
For neither pension, post, nor place,
Am I your humble debtor:
So, nae reflection on your grace,
Your kingship to bespatter;
There's mony waur been o' the race,
And aiblins[2] ane been better
Than you this day.

[1] Make. [2] Perhaps.

'Tis very true, my sov'reign king,
  My skill may weel be doubted:
But facts are chiels that winna ding[1]
  An' downa be disputed:
Your royal nest beneath your wing,
  Is e'en right reft an' clouted,[2]
And now the third part of the string,
  An' less, will gang about it
    Than did ae day.

Far be 't frae me that I aspire
  To blame your legislation,
Or say, ye wisdom want, or fire,
  To rule this mighty nation!
But faith! I muckle doubt, my Sire,
  Ye've trusted ministration
To chaps, wha, in a barn or byre
  Wad better fill their station
    Than courts yon day.

And now ye've gi'en auld Britain peace,
  Her broken shins to plaster:
Your sair taxation does her fleece,
  Till she has scarce a tester:
For me thank God! my life's a lease,
  Nae bargain wearing faster,
Or, faith! I fear, that wi' the geese
  I shortly boost[3] to pasture
    I' the craft[4] some day.

I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,
  When taxes he enlarges,
(An' Will's a true guid fallow's get,[5]
  A name not envy spairges,[6])

[1] Be put down.
[2] Torn and patched. The American Colonies were lost.
[3] Need. [4] Field. [5] Child. [6] Sullie

That he intends to pay your debt,
An' lessen a' your charges;
But, God-sake! let nae saving fit
Abridge your bonnie barges
An boats this day.

Adieu, my Liege! may Freedom geck[1]
Beneath your high protection;
An' may ye rax[2] Corruption's neck,
And gi'e her for dissection!
But since I 'm here, I'll no neglect,
In loyal, true affection,
To pay your Queen, with due respect,
My fealty an' subjection
This great birthday.

Hail, Majesty Most Excellent!
While nobles strive to please ye,
Will ye accept a compliment
A simple poet gi'es ye?
Thae bonnie bairntime, Heaven has lent,
Still higher may they heeze ye[3]
In bliss, till Fate some day is sent,
For ever to release ye
Frae care that day.

For you, young potentate o' Wales,
I tell your highness fairly,
Down Pleasure's stream, wi' swelling sails,
I 'm tauld ye 're driving rarely;
But some day ye may gnaw your nails,
An' curse your folly sairly,
That e'er ye brak Diana's pales,
Or rattled dice wi' Charlie,[4]
By night or day.

[1] Exult. [2] Stretch. [3] Raise. [4] C. J. Fox

Yet aft a ragged cowte's[1] been known
To mak' a noble aiver;[2]
So ye may doucely fill a throne,
For a' their clishmaclaver:
There's him[3] at Agincourt wha shone,
Few better were or braver;
And yet wi' funny, queer Sir John,[4]
He was an unco shaver[5]
For mony a day.

For you, right rev'rend Osnaburgh[6]
Nane sets the lawn-sleeve sweeter,
Although a ribbon at your lug
Wad been a dress completer:
As ye disown yon paughty[7] dog
That bears the keys of Peter,
Then, swith![8] an' get a wife to hug,
Or, trouth! ye'll stain the mitre
Some luckless day.

Ye, lastly, bonnie blossoms a',
Ye royal lasses dainty,
Heaven mak' you guid as weel as braw,
An' gi'e you lads a-plenty!
But sneer nae British boys awa',
For kings are unco scant aye;
An' German gentles are but sma',
They 're better just than want aye,
On onie day.

God bless you a'! consider now,
Ye're unco muckle dautet;[9]
But, ere the course o' life be through,
It may be bitter sautet;

[1] Colt. [2] Cart-horse. [3] King Henry V.
[4] Sir John Falstaff, *vide* Shakspere. [5] Wag
[6] Osnaburgh gave the title of Bishop to George the Third's second son. [7] Proud. [8] Get off, *i.e.* "make haste."
[9] Caressed.

An' I ha'e seen their coggie[1] fou,
That yet ha'e tarrow't[2] at it:
But, or the day was done, I trow,
The laggen[3] they ha'e clautet[4]
Fu' clean that day.

DESPONDENCY.

AN ODE.

OPPRESS'D with grief, oppress'd with care,
A burden more than I can bear,
I sit me down and sigh:
O life! thou art a galling load,
Along a rough, a weary road,
To wretches such as I!
Dim backward as I cast my view,
What sick'ning scenes appear!
What sorrows yet may pierce me thro',
Too justly I may fear!
Still caring, despairing,
Must be my bitter doom;
My woes here shall close ne'er,
But with the closing tomb!

Happy, ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard!
Ev'n when the wished end's deny'd,
Yet while the busy means are ply'd,
They bring their own reward:
Whilst I, a hope-abandon'd wight,
Unfitted with an aim,
Meet ev'ry sad returning night,
And joyless morn the same;

[1] Dish. [2] Refused. Platter. [4] Scraped.

You, bustling and justling,
Forget each grief and pain;
I, listless, yet restless,
Find every prospect vain.

How blest the Solitary's lot,
Who, all-forgetting, all-forgot,
Within his humble cell,
The cavern wild with tangling roots,
Sits o'er his newly-gather'd fruits,
Beside his crystal well!
Or, haply, to his ev'ning thought,
By unfrequented stream,
The ways of men are distant brought,
A faint collected dream:
While praising, and raising
His thoughts to Heav'n on high,
As wand'ring, meand'ring,
He views the solemn sky.

Then I, no lonely hermit plac'd
Where never human footstep trac'd,
Less fit to play the part;
The lucky moment to improve,
And just to stop, and just to move,
With self-respecting art:
But, ah! those pleasures, loves, and joys,
Which I too keenly taste,
The solitary can despise,
Can want, and yet be blest!
He needs not, he heeds not,
Or human love or hate,
Whilst I here must cry here,
At perfidy ingrate!

Oh! enviable, early days,
When dancing thoughtless pleasure's maze,
To care, to guilt unknown!
How ill exchang'd for riper times,

To feel the follies or the crimes,
Of others, or my own!
Ye tiny elves that guiltless sport,
Like linnets in the bush,
Ye little know the ills ye court,
When manhood is your wish
The losses the crosses,
That active man engage!
The fears all, the tears all,
Of dim-declining age!

VERSES TO AN OLD SWEETHEART AFTER HER MARRIAGE.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF A COPY OF HIS POEMS PRESENTED TO THE LADY.

ONCE fondly loved, and still remembered dear!
Sweet early object of my youthful vows!
Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere,—
Friendship! 'tis all cold duty now allows.

And when you read the simple, artless rhymes,
One friendly sigh for him—he asks no more—
Who distant burns in flaming torrid climes,
Or haply lies beneath th' Atlantic's roar,

VERSES WRITTEN UNDER VIOLENT GRIEF.

[The following lines, which first appeared in the *Sun* newspaper, April, 1823, appear to have been originally written on a leaf of a copy of his poems presented to a friend.]

ACCEPT the gift a friend sincere
  Wad on thy worth be pressin';
Remembrance oft may start a tear,
But oh! that tenderness forbear,
  Though 'twad my sorrows lessen.

My morning raise sae clear and fair,
  I thought sair storms wad never
Bedew the scene; but grief and care
In wildest fury hae made bare
  My peace, my hope for ever!

You think I'm glad; oh! I pay weel
  For a' the joy I borrow,
In solitude—then, then I feel
I canna to myself conceal
  My deeply ranklin' sorrow.

Farewell! within thy bosom free
  A sigh may whiles awaken;
A tear may wet thy laughin' e'e,
For Scotia's son—ance gay like thee,
  Now hopeless, comfortless, forsaken

EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND,—ANDREW HUNTER AIKEN.

MAY, 1786.

"Every young man ought to learn this grand homily, take its truths to heart, and practise them."—*Dublin Chairman at Centenary.*

I LANG hae thought, my youthfu' friend,
A something to have sent you,
Tho' it should serve nae ither end
Than just a kind memento;
But how the subject-theme may gang,
Let time and chance determin;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

Ye'll try the world fu' soon my lad,
And Andrew dear, believe me,
Ye'll find mankind an unco squad,
And muckle they may grieve ye:
For care and trouble set your thought,
Ev'n when your end's attained;
And a' your views may come to nought,
Where ev'ry nerve is strained.

I'll no say, men are villains a';
The real, harden'd wicked,
Wha[1] hae nae check but human law,
Are to a few restricked:
But, Och! mankind are unco weak,
An' little to be trusted;
If self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted!

Yet they wha[1] fa'[2] in fortune's strife,
Their fate we should na censure,
For still th' important end of life
They equally may answer;

[1] Who. [2] Fall.

A man may hae an honest heart,
Tho' poortith[1] hourly stare him;
A man may take a neebor's part,
Yet hae nae cash to spare him.

Aye free, aff-han'[2] your story tell,
When wi' a bosom crony;
But still keep something to yoursel
Ye scarcely tell to ony.
Conceal yourself as weel's ye can
Frae critical dissection;
But keek[3] thro' every other man,
Wi' sharpen'd sly inspection.

The sacred lowe[4] o' weel-plac'd love,
Luxuriantly indulge it;
But never tempt th' illicit rove,
Tho' naething should divulge it;
I wave the quantum o' the sin,
The hazard o' concealing;
But, Och! it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling!

To catch dame Fortune's golden smile,
Assiduous wait upon her;
And gather gear by ev'ry while
That's justify'd by honour;
Not for to hide it in a hedge,
Nor for a train attendant;
But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent.

The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip,
To haud the wretch in order;
But where ye feel your honour grip,
Let that aye be your border;
Its slightest touches, instant pause—
Debar a' side pretences;
And resolutely keep its laws,
Uncaring consequences.

[1] Poverty. [2] Off-hand. [3] Peep. [4] Flame.

The great Creator to revere,
Must sure become the creature;
But still the preaching cant forbear,
And ev'n the rigid feature;
Yet ne'er with wits profane to range,
Be complaisance extended;
An atheist-laugh's a poor exchange
For Deity offended!

When ranting round in pleasure's ring,
Religion may be blinded;
Or if she gie a random sting,
It may be little minded;
But when on life we're tempest driv'n,
A conscience but a canker—
A correspondence fix'd wi' Heav'n
Is sure a noble anchor!

Adieu, dear amiable Youth!
Your heart can ne'er be wanting!
May prudence, fortitude, and truth,
Erect your brow undaunting!
In ploughman phrase, "God send you speed,"
Still daily to grow wiser;
And may you better reck the rede,[1]
Than ever did the adviser!

FAREWELL TO AYRSHIRE.

SCENES of woe and scenes of pleasure,
Scenes that former thoughts renew,
Scenes of woe and scenes of pleasure,
Now a sad and last adieu!

Bonny Doon, sae sweet and gloamin',
Fare thee weel before I gang!
Bonny Doon, whare early roaming,
First I weaved the rustic sang.

[1] Heed the council.

Bowers, adieu, whare Love decoying
First inthralled this heart o' mine,
There the saftest sweets enjoying—
Sweets that Mem'ry ne'er shall tyne

Friends, so near my bosom ever,
Ye hae rendered moments dear;
But alas! when forced to sever,
Then the stroke, oh, how severe!

Friends, that parting tear reserve it,
Though 'tis doubly dear to me!
Could I think I did deserve it,
How much happier would I be!

Scenes of woe and scenes of pleasure,
Scenes that former thoughts renew,
Scenes of woe and scenes of pleasure,
Now a sad and last adieu!

THE BRIGS OF AYR.

[Inscribed to JOHN BALLANTYNE, Esq., Ayr.]

THE simple Bard, rough at the rustic plough,
Learning his tuneful trade from every bough;
The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn-bush;
The soaring lark, the perching redbreast shrill,
Or deep-toned plovers, grey, wild-whistling o'er the hill,
Shall he, nurst in the peasant's lowly shed,
To hardy independence bravely bred,
By early poverty to hardships steeled,
And trained to arms in stern Misfortune's field,
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile, mercenary Swiss of rhymes?
Or labour hard the panegyric close,
With all the venal soul of dedicating prose?

No! Though his artless strains he rudely sings,
And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,
He glows with all the spirit of the Bard,
Fame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward.
Still, if some patron's generous care he trace,
Skilled in the secret, to bestow with grace;
When Ballantyne befriends his humble name,
And hands the rustic stranger up to fame,
With heartfelt throes his grateful bosom swells,
The God-like bliss, to give, alone excels.

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter hap,[1]
And thack[2] and rape secure the toil-won crap;
Potatoe-bings[3] are snuggèd up fra skaith[4]
Of coming winter's biting, frosty breath;
The bees rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
Unnumbered buds and flowers, delicious spoils,
Sealed up with frugal care in massive waxen piles,
Are doomed by man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
The death o' devils smoored[5] wi' brimstone reek:
The thundering guns are heard on every side,
The wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide;
The feathered field mates, bound by nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie:
(What warm, poetic heart, but inly bleeds,
And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds!)
Nae mair the flower in field or meadow springs:
Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
Except perhaps the Robin's whistling glee,
Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree:
The hoary morns precede the sunny days,
Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the noontide blaze.
While thick the gossamour waves wanton in the rays.
'Twas in that season when a simple Bard,
Unknown and poor—simplicity's reward—
Ae night, within the ancient burgh of Ayr,
By whim inspired, or haply prest with care;

[1] Covering. [2] Thatch. [3] Heaps. [4] Harm
[5] Smothered.

He left his bed, and took his wayward route,
And down by Simpson's [1] wheeled the left about:
(Whether impelled by all-directing Fate,
To witness what I after shall narrate;
Or whether wrapt in meditation high,
He wandered out he knew not where nor why)
The drowsy Dungeon-clock [2] had numbered two,
And Wallace Tower [2] had sworn the fact was true:
The tide-swollen Firth, with sullen sounding roar,
Through the still night dashed hoarse along the shore
All else was hushed as Nature's closed e'e;
The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree;
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crept, gently crusting o'er the glittering stream.

When lo! on either hand the list'ning Bard,
The clanging sugh of whistling wings is heard;
Two dusky forms dart through the midnight air,
Swift as the Gos [3] drives on the wheeling hare;
Ane on th' Auld Brig his airy shape uprears,
The ither flutters o'er the rising piers:
Our warlock Rhymer instantly descried
The sprites that owre the Brigs of Ayr preside.
(That Bards are second-sighted is nae joke,
And ken the lingo of the spiritual folk;
Fays, spunkies, kelpies, a', they can explain them,
And ev'n the very de'ils they brawly ken them.)
Auld Brig appeared of ancient Pictish race,
The very wrinkles Gothic in his face:
He seemed as he wi' Time had warstled lang,
Yet teughly doure, he bade an unco bang.[4]
New Brig was buskit in a braw new coat,
That he at Lon'on, frae ane Adams got;
In's hand five taper staves as smooth's a bead,
With virls [5] and whirlygigums at the head.
The Goth was stalking round with anxious search,

[1] A noted tavern at the Auld Brig end. [2] The two steeples.
[3] The gos-hawk, or falcon.
[4] Toughly obdurate, he bore a mighty blow.
[5] A ring around a column.

Spying the time-worn flaws in every arch;
It chanced his new-come neebor took his e'e,
And e'en a vexed and angry heart had he!
Wi' thieveless [1] sneer to see his modish mien,
He, down the water, gies him this guideen:—

AULD BRIG.

I doubt na,' frien,' ye'll think ye're nae sheepshank,[2]
Ance ye were streekit [3] o'er frae bank to bank!
But gin ye be a brig as auld as me—
Though faith that day I doubt ye'll never see;
There'll be, if that date come, I'll wad a beddle,[4]
Some fewer whigmeleeries in your noddle.

NEW BRIG.

Auld Vandal, ye but show your little mense,[5]
Just much about it wi' your scanty sense;
Will your poor narrow footpath of a street,
Where twa wheelbarrows tremble when they meet.
Your ruined, formless bulk, o' stane an' lime,
Compare wi' bonny brigs o' modern time?
There's men o' taste would tak' the Ducat stream,[6]
Though they should cast the very sark and swim,
Ere they would grate their feelings wi' the view
Of sic an ugly, Gothic hulk as you.

AULD BRIG.

Conceited gowk![7] puffed up wi windy pride;
This mony a year I've stood the flood and tide;
And though wi' crazy eild I'm sair forfairn,
I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless cairn!
As yet ye little ken about the matter,
But twa-three winters will inform ye better.
When heavy, dark, continued, a'day rains,

[1] Spiteful. [2] No worthless thing [3] Stretched.
[4] Bet a Doit. [5] Manners.
[6] A noted ford, just above the Auld Brig. [7] Fool.

Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains;
When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil,
Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
Or haunted Garpal [1] draws his feeble source,
Aroused by blustering winds an' spotting thowes,
In mony a torrent down his sna-broo rowes;
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat,[2]
Sweeps dams, an' mills, an' brigs a' to the gate;
And from Glenbuck,[3] down to the Ratton-key,[4]
Auld Ayr is just one lengthened, tumbling sea;
Then down ye'll hurl, deil nor ye never rise!
And dash the gumlie jaups [5] up to the pouring skies,
A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost,
That Architecture's noble art is lost!

NEW BRIG.

Fine architecture, trowth, I needs must say't o't!
The Lord be thankit that we've tint the gate o't!
Gaunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices,
Hanging with threatening jut, like precipices;
O'er-arching, mouldy, gloom-inspiring coves,
Supporting roofs fantastic, stony groves;
Windows and doors, in nameless sculpture drest,
With order, symmetry, or taste unblest;
Forms like some bedlam statuary's dream,
The crazed creations of misguided whim;
Forms might be worshipped on the bended knee,
And still the second dread command be free,
Their likeness is not found on earth, in air, or sea.
Mansions that would disgrace the building taste
Of any mason, reptile, bird or beast,
Fit only for a doited monkish race,
Or frosty maids forsworn the dear embrace,
Or cuifs [7] of latter times, wha held the notion

[1] The banks of Garpal Water—one of the few places in the west of Scotland where those fancy-scaring beings, known by the name of ghaists, still continue pertinaciously to inhabit.—BURNS.
[2] Flood. [3] The source of the River Ayr.
[4] A small landing-place above the large quay.
[5] Muddy spray. [6] Lost. [7] Fools.

That sullen gloom was sterling true devotion;
Fancies that our guid burgh denies protection,—
And soon may they expire, unblest with resurrection!

AULD BRIG.

O ye, my dear-remembered, ancient yearlings,[1]
Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings!
Ye worthy Provesses, an' mony a Bailie,
Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil aye;
Ye dainty Deacons, an' ye douce Conveeners,
To whom our moderns are but causey-cleaners;
Ye godly councils wha hae blest this town;
Ye godly brethren of the sacred gown,
Wha meekly gie your hurdies to the smiters;
And (what would now be strange) ye godly writers:
A'ye douce folk I've borne aboon the broo,[2]
Were ye but here, what would ye say or do!
How would your spirits groan in deep vexation,
To see each melancholy alteration;
And agonizing, curse the time and place
When ye begat the base, degen'rate race!
Nae langer reverend men, their country's glory,
In plain braid Scots hold forth a plain braid story!
Nae langer thrifty citizens, and douce,
Meet owre a pint, or in the Council-house;
But staumrel,[3] corky-headed, graceless gentry,
The herryment and ruin of the country;
Men three-parts made by tailors and by barbers,
Wha waste your weel-hained gear on their new brigs and harbours!

NEW BRIG.

Now haud you there! for faith ye've said enough,
And muckle mair than ye can mak' to through.[4]
As for your priesthood, I shall say but little,
Corbies and clergy are a shot right kittle:
But, under favour o' your langer beard,

[1] Contemporaries. [2] Above the water. [3] Half-witted
[4] Makegood

Abuse o' magistrates might weel be spared:
To liken them to your auld-warld squad,
I must needs say, comparisons are odd.
In Ayr wag-wits nae mair can hae a handle
To mouth "a citizen," a term o' scandal:
Nae mair the council waddles down the street,
In all the pomp of ignorant conceit;
Men wha grew wise priggin' owre hops an' raisins,
Or gathered liberal views in bonds and seisins.
If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,
Had shored them with a glimmer of his lamp,
And would to common sense for once betrayed them,
Plain, dull Stupidity stept kindly in to aid them.

What farther clishmaclaver[1] might been said,
What bloody wars, if sprites had blood to shed,
No man can tell; but all before their sight
A fairy train appeared, in order bright:
Adown the glittering stream they fetely danced;
Bright to the moon their various dresses glanced:
They footed o'er the watery glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet:
While arts of minstrelsy among them rung,
And soul-ennobling bards heroic ditties sung.
Oh, had M'Lauchlan,[2] thairm[3]-inspiring sage,
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,
When through his dear Strathspeys they bore with highland rage;
Or when they struck old Scotia's melting airs,
The lover's raptured joys or bleeding cares;
How would his Highland lug[4] been nobler fired,
And ev'n his matchless hand with finer touch inspired;
No guess could tell what instrument appeared,
But all the soul of music's self was heard;

[1] Nonsense, idle gossip.
[2] A well-known performer of Scottish music on the violin.
[3] Fiddle-string. [4] Ear.

Harmonious concert rung in every part,
While simple melody poured moving on the heart.

The Genius of the stream in front appears,
A venerable chief advanced in years;
His hoary head with water-lilies crowned,
His manly leg with garter tangle bound.
Next came the loveliest pair in all the ring,
Sweet Female Beauty hand in hand with Spring;
Then, crowned with flowery hay, came Rural Joy,
And Summer, with his fervid beaming eye:
All-cheering plenty, with her flowing horn,
Led yellow Autumn wreathed with nodding corn;
Then Winter's time-bleached locks did hoary show
By Hospitality with cloudless brow.
Next followed Courage[1] with his martial stride,
From where the Feal[2] wild woody coverts hide;
Benevolence, with mild benignant air,
A female form,[3] came from the towers of Stair:
Learning and worth[4] in equal measures trode
From simple Catrine, their long-loved abode:
Last white-robed Peace, crowned with a hazel wreath,
To rustic agriculture did bequeath
The broken iron instruments of death;
At sight of whom our sprites forgat their kindling wrath.

[1] Capt. Hugh Montgomery, of Coils-field.
[2] A tributary stream of the Ayr.
[3] The Poet alludes here to Mrs. Stewart, of Stair. Stair was then in her possession. She removed to Afton Lodge, on the banks of Afton, a stream which he afterwards celebrated in a song entitled Afton Water.
[4] Professor Dugald Stewart.

1787.

TO THE GUIDWIFE[1] OF WAUCHOPE HOUSE.

GUIDWIFE,

I mind it weel, in early date,
When I was beardless, young, and blate,[2]
And first could thrash the barn,
Or haud a yoking' at the pleugh;
And though forfoughten[3] sair eneugh,
Yet unco proud to learn:
When first amang the yellow corn
A man I reckoned was,
And wi' the lave[4] ilk merry morn
Could rank my rig and lass,
Still shearing, and clearing,
The tither stookèd raw,
Wi' claivers and haivers[5]
Wearing the day awa'.

Even then a wish, (I mind its power,)
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast—
That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some usefu' plan or beuk could make,
Or sing a sang at least.
The rough burr thistle, spreading wide
Amang the bearded bear,[6]
I turned the weeder clips aside,
And spared the symbol dear:
No nation, no station,
My envy e'er could raise,
A Scot still, but blot still,
I knew nae higher praise.

[1] Mrs. Scott of Wauchope, was a lady of great taste and talent, and was niece to Mrs. Cockburn, who wrote a version of "Flower of the Forest."

[2] Bashful. [3] Fatigued. [4] Rest.
[5] Idle stories and gossip. [6] Barley.

But still the elements o' sang,
In formless jumble, right and wrang,
  Wild floated in my brain;
Till on that hairst[1] I said before,
My partner in the merry core,
  She roused the forming strain:
I see her yet, the sonsie quean,[2]
  That lighted up my jingle,
Her witching smile, her pauky een,
  That gart[3] my heart-strings tingle
    I firèd, inspirèd,
      At every kindling keek,[4]
    But bashing, and dashing,
      I fearèd aye to speak.

Health to the sex! ilk guid chiel[5] says,
Wi' merry dance in winter days,
  And we to share in common:
The gust o' joy, the balm of woe,
The saul o' life, the heaven below,
  Is rapture-giving woman.
Ye surly sumphs,[6] who hate the name,
  Be mindfu' o' your mither;
She, honest woman, may think shame
  That ye 're connected with her.
    Ye 're wae[7] men, ye 're nae men,
      That slight the lovely dears;
    To shame ye, disclaim ye,
      Ilk honest birkie[8] swears.

For you, no bred to barn and byre,
Wha sweetly tune the Scottish lyre,
  Thanks to you for your line:
The marlèd plaid ye kindly spare
By me should gratefully be ware;
  'Twad please me to the nine.

[1] Harvest. [2] Comely lass. [3] Made.
[4] Glance. [5] Fellow. [6] Dolts.
[7] Woeful. [8] Fellow.

I'd be mair vauntie[1] o' my hap,[2]
Douce hingin'[3] owre my curple,
Than ony ermine ever lap,
Or proud imperial purple.
Fareweel, then, lang heal, then,
And plenty be your fa';
May losses and crosses
Ne'er at your hallan[4] ca'!

THE TWO LAWYERS.

[A SKETCH MADE IN 1787.]

He clenched his pamphlets in his fist,
He quoted and he hinted,
Till in a declamation mist
His argument he tint[5] it;
He gapèd for't, he grapèd[6] for't,
He found it was awa', man;
But what his common sense cam' short,
He ekèd out wi' law, man.

Collected Harry stood a wee,
Then opened out his arm, man;
His lordship sat, wi' ruefu' e'e,
And eyed the gath'ring storm, man;
Like wind-driven hail, it did assail,
Or torrents o'er a linn, man;
The Bench sae wise, lift up their eyes,
Half-wakened wi' the din, man.

[1] Proud. [2] Covering. [3] Bravely hold. [4] Porch.
[5] Lost. [6] Groped

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE PARLOUR OF THE INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH.

ADMIRING Nature in her wildest grace,
These northern scenes with weary feet I trace;
O'er many a winding dale and painful steep,
Th' abodes of covey'd grouse and timid sheep,
My savage journey, curious, I pursue,
Till fam'd Breadalbane opens on my view.
The meeting cliffs each deep-sunk glen divides,
The woods, wild-scattered, clothe their ample sides;
Th' outstretching lake, embosom'd 'mong the hills,
The eye with wonder and amazement fills;
The Tay meand'ring sweet in infant pride,
The palace rising on his verdant side;
The lawns wood-fringed in Nature's native taste;
The hillocks dropt in Nature's careless haste;
The arches striding o'er the new-born stream;
The village glittering in the noontide beam.

* * * * *

Poetic ardours in my bosom swell,
Lone wand'ring by the hermit's mossy cell;
The sweeping theatre of hanging woods;
Th' incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods—

* * * * *

Here Poesy might wake her heav'n-taught lyre,
And look through nature with creative fire;
Here, to the wrongs of Fate half reconcil'd,
Misfortune's lighten'd steps might wander wild;
And disappointment, in these lonely bounds,
Find balm to soothe her bitter rankling wounds:
Here heart-struck Grief might heav'nward stretch her scan,
And injur'd Worth forget and pardon man.

* * * * *

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL, STANDING BY THE FALL OF FYERS, NEAR LOCH-NESS.

AMONG the heathy hills and ragged woods
The roaring Fyers pours his mossy floods,
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,
Where, thro' a shapeless breach, his stream resounds.
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep recoiling surges foam below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless Echo's ear astonished rends.
Dim-seen, thro' rising mists, and ceaseless show'rs,
The hoary cavern, wide-surrounding, low'rs,
Still, thro' the gap the struggling river toils,
And still, below, the horrid cauldron boils—

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER,[1]

TO THE NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE.

MY LORD, I know your noble ear
Woe ne'er assails in vain;
Emboldened thus, I beg you'll hear
Your humble slave complain,
How saucy Phœbus' scorching beams,
In flaming summer pride,
Dry-withering, waste my foamy streams,
And drink my crystal tide.

The lightly jumping, glowering trouts,
That through my waters play,
If, in their random, wanton spouts,
They near the margin stray;
If, hapless chance! they linger lang,
I'm scorching up to shallow,
They're left the whitening stanes amang,
In gasping death to wallow.

[1] Bruar Falls, in Athole, are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful; but their effect is much impaired by the want of trees and shrubs.

Last day I grat wi' spite and teen,
As Poet Burns came by,
That, to a bard I should be seen
Wi' half my channel dry:
A panegyric rhyme, I ween,
Ev'n as I was he shored [1] me;
But had I in my glory been,
He, kneeling, wad adored me.

Here, foaming down the shelvy rocks,
In twisting strength I rin;
There, high my boiling torrent smokes,
Wild-roaring o'er a linn:
Enjoying large each spring and well
As nature gave them me,
I am, although I say't mysel',
Worth gaun a mile to see.

Would then my noble master please
To grant my highest wishes,
He'll shade my banks wi towering trees,
And bonnie spreading bushes;
Delighted doubly then, my Lord,
You'll wander on my banks,
And listen mony a grateful bird
Return you tuneful thanks.

The sober laverock,[2] warbling wild,
Shall to the skies aspire;
The gowdspink,[3] music's gayest child,
Shall sweetly join the choir:
The blackbird strong, the lintwhite [4] clear,
The mavis [5] mild and mellow;
The robin pensive autumn cheer,
In all her locks of yellow.

[1] Assured. [2] Lark. [3] Goldfinch.
[4] Linnet. [5] Thrush.

This, too, a covert shall ensure,
To shield them from the storm;
And coward maukin [1] sleep secure,
Low in her grassy form:
Here shall the shepherd make his seat,
To weave his crown of flowers;
Or find a sheltering safe retreat,
From prone descending showers.

And here, by sweet endearing stealth,
Shall meet the loving pair,
Despising worlds with all their wealth
As empty, idle care:
The flowers shall vie in all their charms
The hour of heaven to grace,
And birks extend their fragrant arms
To screen the dear embrace.

Here haply too, at vernal dawn,
Some musing bard may stray,
And eye the smoking, dewy lawn,
And misty mountain grey:
Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,
Mild chequering through the trees,
Rave to my darkly-dashing stream,
Hoarse-swelling on the breeze.

Let lofty firs, and ashes cool,
My lowly banks o'erspread,
And view, deep-bending in the pool,
Their shadows' watery bed!
Let fragrant birks in woodbines drest,
My craggy cliffs adorn;
And for the little songsters' nest,
The close embow'ring thorn.

[1] The hare.

So may old Scotia's darling hope,
  Your little angel band,
Spring, like their fathers, up to prop
  Their honoured native land!
So may through Albion's farthest ken,
  To social flowing glasses,
The grace be—"Athole's honest men,
  And Athole's bonnie lasses!"

CASTLE GORDON.

STREAMS that glide in Orient plains,
Never bound by winter's chains!
  Glowing here on golden sands,
There commixed with foulest stains
  From tyranny's empurpled bands:
These, their richly gleaming waves,
I leave to tyrants and their slaves;
Give me the stream that sweetly laves
    The banks by Castle-Gordon.

Spicy forests, ever gay,
Shading from the burning ray
  Hapless wretches sold to toil,
Or the ruthless native's sway,
  Bent on slaughter, blood and spoil:
Woods that ever verdant wave,
I leave the tyrant and the slave;
Give me the groves that lofty brave
    The storms by Castle-Gordon.

Wildly here, without control,
Nature reigns and rules the whole;
  In that sober, pensive mood,
Dearest to the feeling soul,
  She plants the forest, pours the flood:

Life's poor day I'll musing rave,
And find at night a sheltering cave,
Where waters flow and wild woods wave,
By bonny Castle-Gordon.

ON SCARING SOME WATER FOWL IN LOCH-TURIT, A WILD SCENE AMONG THE HILLS OF OCHTERTYRE.

Why, ye tenants of the lake,
For me your wat'ry haunt forsake?
Tell me, fellow-creatures, why
At my presence thus you fly?
Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred ties?—
Common friend to you and me,
Nature's gifts to all are free:
Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,
Busy feed, or wanton lave;
Or, beneath the sheltering rock,
Bide the surging billows' shock.
Conscious, blushing for our race,
Soon, too soon, your fears I trace;
Man, your proud usurping foe,
Would be lord of all below;
Plumes himself in Freedom's pride,
Tyrant stern to all beside.
The eagle, from the cliffy brow
Marking you his prey below,
In his breast no pity dwells,
Strong Necessity compels.
But man, to whom alone is giv'n
A ray direct from pitying Heav'n,
Glories in his heart humane—
And creatures for his pleasure slain.
In these savage, liquid plains,
Only known to wandering swains,

Where the mossy riv'let strays,
Far from human haunts and ways,
All on Nature you depend,
And life's poor season peaceful spend.
Or, if man's superior might
Dare invade your native right,
On the lofty ether borne,
Man with all his powers you scorn:
Swiftly seek, on clanging wings,
Other lakes and other springs;
And the foe you cannot brave,
Scorn at least to be his slaves.

ON THE DEATH OF SIR JAMES HUNTER BLAIR.[1]

THE lamp of day, with ill-presaging glare,
Dim, cloudy, sunk beneath the western wave;
Th' inconstant blast how'd thro' the dark'ning air,
And hollow whistl'd in the rocky cave.

Lone as I wander'd by each cliff and dell,
Once the lov'd haunts of Scotia's royal train;[2]
Or mus'd where limpid streams, once hallow'd well,[3]
Or mould'ring ruins mark the sacred fane.[4]

Th' increasing blast roar'd round the beetling rocks,
The clouds swift-wing'd flew o'er the starry sky,
The groaning trees untimely shed their locks,
And shooting meteors caught the startled eye.

The paly moon rose in the livid east,
And 'mong the cliffs disclos'd a stately form,
In weeds of woe that frantic beat her breast,
And mix'd her wailings with the raving storm.

[1] Sir James Blair died July 1, 1787; he was a partner in Forbes' Bank, at Edinburgh.

[2] The King's Park at Holyrood House.—R.B.

[3] St Anthony's Well.—R.B [4] St. Anthony's Chapel.—R.B.

Wild to my heart the filial pulses glow,
'Twas Caledonia's trophied shield I view'd:
Her form majestic droop'd in pensive woe,
The lightning of her eye in tears imbued.

Revers'd that spear, redoubtable in war,
Reclin'd that banner, erst in fields unfurl'd,
That like a deathful meteor gleam'd afar,
And brav'd the mighty monarchs of the world.—

"My patriot son fills an untimely grave!"
With accents wild and lifted arms she cried;
"Low lies the hand that oft was stretch'd to save,
Low lies the heart that swell'd with honest pride!

"A weeping country joins a widow's tear,
The helpless poor mix with the orphan's cry;
The drooping Arts surround their patron's bier,
And grateful Science heaves the heartfelt sigh.—

"I saw my sons resume their ancient fire;
I saw fair Freedom's blossoms richly blow;
But, ah! how hope is born but to expire!
Relentless fate has laid their guardian low.—

"My patriot falls, but shall he lie unsung,
While empty greatness saves a worthless name?
No; every Muse shall join her tuneful tongue,
And future ages hear his growing fame.

"And I will join a mother's tender cares,
Thro' future times to make his virtues last,
That distant years may boast of other Blairs,"—
She said, and vanished with the sweeping blast.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF THE LAST EDITION OF HIS POEMS.

PRESENTED TO THE LADY WHOM HE HAD OFTEN CELEBRATED UNDER THE NAME OF CHLORIS.—(MISS LORIMER).

'Tis Friendship's pledge, my young fair friend,
Nor thou the gift refuse,
Nor with unwilling ear attend
The moralizing muse.

Since thou, in all thy youth and charms,
Must bid the world adieu,
(A world 'gainst peace in constant arms)
To join the friendly few.

Since, thy gay morn of life o'ercast,
Chill came the tempest's lower,
(And ne'er misfortune's eastern blast
Did nip a fairer flower.)

Since life's gay scenes must charm no more,
Still much is left behind;
Still nobler wealth hast thou in store—
The comforts of the mind!

Thine is the self-approving glow,
On conscious honour's part;
And, dearest gift of Heaven below,
Thine friendship's truest heart.

The joys refin'd of sense and taste,
With ev'ry muse to rove:
And doubly were the poet blest,
These joys could he improve.

TO THE RUINS OF LINCLUDEN ABBEY.[1]

Ye holy walls, that still sublime
Resist the crumbling touch of Time,
How strongly still your form displays
The piety of ancient days.
As through your ruins, hoar and grey—
Ruins yet beauteous in decay—
The silvery moonbeams trembling fly,
The forms of ages long gone by
Crowd thick on Fancy's wond'ring eye,
And wake the soul to musings high.
Ev'n now, as lost in thought profound,
I view the solemn scene around,
And pensive view with wistful eyes,
The past returns, the present flies;
Again the dome in pristine pride,
Lifts high its roof, and arches wide,
That knit with curious tracery
Each Gothic ornament display;
The high arched windows, painted fair,
Show many a saint and martyr there;
As on their slender forms I gaze,
Methinks they brighten to a blaze;
With noiseless step and taper bright,
What are yon forms that meet my sight?
Slowly they move, while every eye
Is heavenward raised in ecstasy:—
'Tis the fair, spotless, vestal train,
That seeks in prayer the midnight fane.
And hark! what more than mortal sound
Of music breathes the pile around?
'Tis the soft chaunted choral song,
Whose tones the echoing aisles prolong:
Till thence return'd they softly stray
O'er Cluden's wave with fond delay;

[1] On the banks of the river Cluden, near Dumfries. The verses were ascribed to Burns by an anonymous writer, and are included in later editions of his works.

Now on the rising gale swell high,
And now in fainting murmurs die:
The boatmen on Nith's gentle stream,
That glistens in the pale moon's beam,
Suspend their dashing oars to hear
The holy anthem, loud and clear;
Each worldly thought awhile forbear,
And mutter forth a half-formed prayer.
But as I gaze, the vision fails,
Like frost-work touch'd by southern gales;
The altar sinks, the tapers fade,
And all the splendid scenes decay'd.
In window fair the painted pane
No longer glows with holy stain,
But, through the broken glass, the gale
Blows chilly from the misty vale.
The bird of eve flits sullen by,
Her home these aisles and arches high:
The choral hymn, that erst so clear
Broke softly sweet on Fancy's ear,
Is drown'd amid the mournful scream,
That breaks the magic of my dream:
Roused by the sound, I start and see
The ruin'd, sad reality.

MRS. FERGUSSON OF CRAIGDARROCH'S LAMENT FOR THE DEATH OF HER SON.

FATE gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierced my darling's heart,
And with him all the joys are fled
Life can to me impart.
By cruel hands the sapling drops,
In dust dishonoured laid;
So fell the pride of all my hopes,
My age's future shade.

The mother-linnet in the brake
Bewails her ravished young;
So I for my lost darling's sake,
Lament the live-day long.
Death, oft I've feared thy fatal blow,
Now, fond, I bare my breast;
Oh, do thou kindly lay me low
With him I love, at rest!

REMORSE.

[Taken from a collection of MSS. which Burns placed in the hands of his friend, Mrs. Riddel.]

Of all the numerous ills that hurt our peace,
That press the soul, or wring the mind with anguish,
Beyond comparison the worst are those
That to our folly or our guilt we owe.
In every other circumstance, the mind
Has this to say—"It was no deed of mine;"
But when to all the evil of misfortune
This sting is added—"Blame thy foolish self!"
Or worser far the pangs of keen remorse;
The torturing, gnawing consciousness of guilt—
Of guilt, perhaps, where we've involvèd others;
The young, the innocent, who fondly loved us.
Nay, more, that very love their cause of ruin!
O burning hell! in all thy store of torments
There's not a keener lash!
Lives there a man so firm, who, while his heart
Feels all the bitter horrors of his crime,
Can reason down its agonizing throbs,
And after proper purpose of amendment,
Can firmly force his jarring thoughts to peace?
O happy, happy, enviable man!
O glorious magnanimity of soul!

1788.

THE FETE CHAMPETRE.

Given by Mr. Cunninghame, of Enterkine.

TUNE—"KILLIECRANKIE."

O WHA will to Saint Stephen's house,
To do our errands there, man?
O wha will to Saint Stephen's house,
O' th' merry lads of Ayr, man?
Or will we send a man-o'-law?
Or will we send a sodger?
Or him [1] wha led o'er Scotland a'
The meikle Ursa-Major?

Come, will ye court a noble lord,
Or buy a score o' lairds, man?
For worth and honour pawn their word,
Their vote shall be Glencaird's, man?
Ane gies them coin, ane gies them wine,
Anither gies them clatter;
Anbank,[2] wha guess'd the ladies' taste,
He gies a Fête Champêtre.

When Love and Beauty heard the news
The gay green-woods amang, man;
Where gathering flowers and busking bowers,
They heard the blackbird's sang, man;
A vow, they seal'd it with a kiss,
Sir Politics to fetter
As theirs alone, the patent bliss,
To hold a Fête Champêtre.

[1] Boswell.

[2] A place belonging to Mr. Cunninghame, and which, after the Scotch custom, bestows a name on the Laird.

Then mounted Mirth, on gleesome wing
O'er hill and dale she flew, man;
Ilk wimpling burn, ilk crystal spring,
Ilk glen and shaw she knew, man:
She summoned every social sprite,
That sports by wood or water,
On th' bonny banks of Ayr to meet,
And keep this Fête Champêtre.

Cauld Boreas, wi' his boist'rous crew,
Were bound to stakes like kye, man;
And Cynthia's car, o'silver fu',
Clamb up the starry sky, man:
Reflected beams dwell in the streams,
Or down the current shatter;
The western breeze steals through the trees,
To view this Fête Champêtre.

How many a robe sae gaily floats!
What sparkling jewels glance, man!
To Harmony's enchanting notes,
As moves the mazy dance, man;
The echoing wood, the winding flood,
Like Paradise did glitter,
When angels met at Adam's yett,[1]
To hold their Fête Champêtre.

When Politics came there, to mix
And make his ether-stane,[2] man!
He circled round the magic ground,
But entrance found he nane man:
He blush'd for shame, he quat[3] his name,
Foreswore it every letter,
Wi' humble prayer to join and share
This festive Fête Champêtre.

[1] Gate. [2] Adder-stone. [3] Quit.

WRITTEN IN FRIARS-CARSE HERMITAGE.

Glenriddel Hermitage, June 28, 1788. From the MS.

THOU whom chance may hither lead,
Be thou clad in russet weed,
Be thou deckt in silken stole,
Grave these maxims on thy soul.

Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night, in darkness lost;
Hope not sunshine every hour,
Fear not clouds will always lour,
Happiness is but a name,
Make content and ease thy aim.
Ambition is a meteor-gleam,
Fame, an idle, restless dream:
Peace the tenderest flower of spring;
Pleasures, insects on the wing;
Those that sip the dew alone,
Make the butterflies thy own;
Those that would the bloom devour,
Crush the locust, save the flower.
For the future be prepared,
Guard wherever thou canst guard;
But thy utmost duly done,
Welcome what thou canst not shun.
Follies past give thou to air,
Make their consequence thy care:
Keep the name of Man in mind,
And dishonour not thy kind.
Reverence with lowly heart,
Him whose wondrous work thou art;
Keep his goodness still in view,
Thy Trust and thy Example too.

Stranger go, Heaven be thy guide!
Quod the beadsman of Nithe-side.

1790.

SKETCH—NEW YEAR'S DAY.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

THIS day, Time winds the exhausted chain,
To run the twelvemonth's length again:
I see the old, bald-pated fellow,
With ardent eyes, complexion sallow,
Adjust the unimpaired machine,
To wheel the equal dull routine.

The absent lover, minor heir,
In vain assail him with their prayer;
Deaf, as my friend, he sees them press,
Nor makes the hour one moment less.
Will you (the Major's[1] with the hounds,
The happy tenants share his rounds;
Coila's fair Rachel's[2] care to day,
And blooming Keith's[3] engaged with Gray)
From housewife cares a minute borrow—
That grandchild's cap will do to-morrow—
And join with me a-moralizing,
This day's propitious to be wise in.

First, what did yesternight deliver?
"Another year is gone for ever!"
And what is this day's strong suggestion?
"The passing moment's all we rest on!"
Rest on—for what? what do we here?
Or why regard the passing year?
Will Time, amused with proverbed lore,
Add to our date one minute more?
A few days may—a few years must—
Repose us in the silent dust;
Then is it wise to damp our bliss?

[1] Major, afterwards General, Andrew Dunlop, Mrs. Dunlop's second son.

[2] Miss Rachel Dunlop.

[3] Miss Keith Dunlop, the youngest daughter.

Yes—all such reasonings are amiss!
The voice of Nature loudly cries,
And many a message from the skies,
That something in us never dies:
That on this frail, uncertain state,
Hang matters of eternal weight:
That future life, in worlds unknown,
Must take its hue from this alone;
Whether as heavenly glory bright,
Or dark as Misery's woeful night.
Since, then, my honoured first of friends,
On this poor being all depends,
Let us the important Now employ,
And live as those who never die.

Though you, with days and honours crowned,
Witness that filial circle round,
(A sight life's sorrows to repulse,
A sight pale envy to convulse,)
Others now claim your chief regard;
Yourself, you wait your bright reward.

ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON,

A GENTLEMAN WHO HELD THE PATENT FOR HIS HONOURS IMMEDIATELY FROM ALMIGHTY GOD.

But now his radiant course is run,
For Matthew's course was bright;
His soul was like the glorious sun,
A matchless, Heav'nly Light.

O DEATH! thou tyrant fell and bloody!
The meikle devil wi' a woodie[1]
Haurl thee hame to his black smiddie,[2]
O'er hurcheon[3] hides,
And like stock-fish come o'er his studdie[4]
Wi' thy auld sides!

[1] Rope. [2] Smithy. [3] Hedgehog. [4] Anvil.

He's gane, he's gane! he's frae us torn,
The ae best fellow e'er was born!
Thee, Matthew, nature's sel[1] shall mourn
By wood and wild,
Where haply, Pity strays forlorn,
Frae man exil'd.

Ye hills, near neebors o' the starns,
That proudly cock your cresting cairns![2]
Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing yearns,[3]
Where echo slumbers!
Come join, ye Nature's sturdiest bairns,
My wailing numbers!

Mourn, ilka grove the cushat[4] kens!
Ye haz'lly shaws and briery dens!
Ye burnies, wimplin[5] down your glens,
Wi' toddlin din,
Or foaming strang, wi' hasty stens,[6]
Frae lin to lin.[7]

Mourn, little harebells o'er the lea;
Ye stately foxgloves fair to see;
Ye woodbines hanging bonnilie,
In scented bow'rs;
Ye roses on your thorny tree,
The first o' flow'rs.

At dawn, when ev'ry glassy blade
Droops with a diamond at his head,
At ev'n, when beans their fragrance shed,
I' th' rustling gale,
Ye maukins[8] whiddin[9] thro' the glade,
Come join my wail.

Mourn, ye wee songsters o' the wood;
Ye grouse that crap the heather bud;

[1] Self. [2] Heaps of stones. [3] Eagles. [4] Wood-pigeon.
[5] Meandering. [6] Plunges. [7] Pool to pool. [8] Hares.
[9] Running.

Ye curlews calling thro' a clud;[1]
Ye whistling plover;
And mourn, ye whirring paitrick brood;
He's gane for ever!

Mourn, sooty coots, and speckled teals,
Ye fisher herons, watching eels;
Ye duck and drake, wi' airy wheels
Circling the lake;
Ye bitterns, till the quagmire reels,
Rair[2] for his sake.

Mourn, clam'ring craiks at close o' day,
'Mang fields o' flow'ring claver gay;
And when ye wing your annual way
Frae our cauld shore,
Tell thae far warlds, wha lies in clay,
Wham we deplore.

Ye houlets,[3] frae your ivy bow'r
In some auld tree, or eldritch[4] tow'r,
What time the moon, wi' silent glow'r
Sets up her horn,
Wail thro' the dreary midnight hour
Till waukrife[5] morn!

O rivers, forests, hills, and plains!
Oft have ye heard my canty[6] strains:
But now, what else for me remains
But tales of woe;
And frae my een the drapping rains
Maun ever flow.

Mourn, Spring, thou darling of the year!
Ilk cowslip cup shall kep a tear!

[1] Cloud. [2] Boom. [3] Owls.
[4] Dismal. [5] Wakeful. [6] Merry.

Thou, Simmer, while each corny spear
Shoots up its head,
Thy gay, green, flow'ry tresses shear
For him that's dead!

Thou, Autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,
In grief thy sallow mantle tear!
Thou, Winter, hurling thro' the air
The roaring blast,
Wide o'er the naked world declare
The worth we've lost!

Mourn him, thou Sun, great source of light:
Mourn, Empress of the silent night!
And you, ye twinkling starnies bright,
My Matthew mourn!
For through your orbs he's ta'en his flight,
Ne'er to return.

O Henderson; the man! the brother!
And art thou gone, and gone for ever!
And hast thou crost that unknown river,
Life's dreary bound!
Like thee, where shall I find another,
The world around.

Go to your sculptur'd tombs, ye Great,
In a' the tinsel trash o' state!
But by thy honest turf I'll wait,
Thou man of worth!
And weep the ae[1] best fellow's fate
E'er lay in earth.

THE EPITAPH.

STOP, passenger! my story's brief,
And truth I shall relate, man;
I tell nae common tale o' grief,—
For Matthew was a great man.

[1] One.

If thou uncommon merit hast,
Yet spurn'd at fortune's door, man;
A look of pity hither cast,—
For Matthew was a poor man.

If thou a noble sodger art,
That passest by this grave, man,
There moulders here a gallant heart,—
For Matthew was a brave man.

If thou on men, their works and ways,
Canst throw uncommon light, man;
Here lies wha weel had won thy praise,—
For Matthew was a bright man.

If thou at friendship's sacred ca'
Wad life itself resign, man;
Thy sympathetic tear maun fa',—
For Matthew was a kind man.

If thou art staunch without a stain,
Like the unchanging blue, man;
This was a kinsman o' thy ain,—
For Matthew was a true man.

If thou hast wit, and fun, and fire,
And ne'er gude wine did fear, man;
This was thy billie, dam, and sire,—
For Matthew was a queer man.

If ony whiggish whingin[1] sot,
To blame poor Matthew dare, man;
May dool[2] and sorrow be his lot,—
For Matthew was a rare man.

[1] Complaining. [2] Mourning.

TAM O' SHANTER.

A TALE.

Brownyis and of Bogilis full is this Buke.—*Gawin Douglas.*

WHEN chapman billies leave the street
And drouthy neebors, neebors meet,
As market days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to take the gate;
While we sit bousing at the nappy,[1]
An' getting fou and unco happy,
We thinkna on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and stiles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Whare sits our sulky sullen dame,
Gath'ring her brows like gath'ring storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest Tam O'Shanter,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter,
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonny lasses).

O Tam! hadst thou but been sae wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!
She tauld thee weel thou wast a skellum,[2]
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum:[3]
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou was nae sober;
That ilka melder,[4] wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee gat roarin fou on;
That at the Lord's house, ev'n on Sunday
Thou drank wi Kirkton[5] Jean till Monday.
She prophesy'd that, late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drown'd in Doon;
Or catch'd wi' warlocks[6] i' the mirk,[7]
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

[1] Ale. [2] Worthless fellow. [3] Idle talker.
[4] Every time that corn was sent to be ground.
[5] Kirkton the name of a village in which the kirk stands.
[6] Wizards. [7] Dark.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet,[1]
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd, sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!
But to our tale: Ae market night,
Tam had got planted unco right;
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats,[2] that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter Johnny,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony;
Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither.
The night drave on wi' sangs and clatter;
And ay the ale was growing better:
The landlady and Tam grew gracious,
Wi' favours, secret, sweet, and precious:
The souter[3] tauld his queerest stories;
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.
Care, mad to see a man sae happy
E'en drowned himself amang the nappy!
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!
But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.
Nae man can tether time or tide;—
The hour approaches Tam maun ride;
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;

[1] Makes me weep. [2] Frothing ale. [3] Shoemaker.

And sic a night he taks the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.
The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;
The rattling show'rs rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd
Loud, deep, and lang, the thunder bellow'd:
That night, a child might understand,
The Deil had business on his hand.
Weel mounted on his grey mare, Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit[1] on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire,
Whiles holding fast his gude blue bonnet;
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;
Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares;
Kirk Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.
By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;[2]
And past the birks[3] and meikle[4] stane,
Whare drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;
And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,
Whare hunters fand the murder'd bairn;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Whare Mungo's mither hang'd hersel.
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll:
When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk Alloway seem'd in a bleeze;
Thro' ilka bore[5] the beams were glancing;
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.
Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquebae, we'll face the Devil!

[1] Went fast. [2] Smothered. [3] Birches. [4] Big.
[5] Hole in the wall.

The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he car'd na deils a boddle.
But Maggie stood right sair astonish'd,
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd
She ventur'd forward on the light;
And, wow! Tam saw an unco sight!
Warlocks and witches in a dance;
Nae cotillion brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.
At winnock-bunker[1] in the east,
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;
A towzie[2] tyke, black, grim, and large,
To gie them music was his charge:
He screw'd the pipes and gart[3] them skirl,[4]
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.—
Coffins stood round, like open presses,
That shaw'd the dead in their last dresses;
And by some devilish cantrip[5] slight
Each in its cauld hand held a light,—
By which heroic Tam was able
To note upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes in gibbet airns;[6]
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristen'd bairns;
A thief, new-cutted frae a rape,[7]
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape;
Five tomahawks, wi' blude red rusted;
Five scymitars, wi' murder crusted;
A garter, which a babe had strangled;
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son o' life bereft,
The grey hairs yet stack to the heft;
Wi' mair o' horrible and awfu',
Which ev'n to name wad be unlawfu'.
As Tammie glowr'd, amaz'd, and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
The piper loud and louder blew;
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,

[1] Window-seat. [2] Shaggy. [3] Forced. [4] Scream.
[5] Magic. [6] Irons. [7] Rope.

And coost her duddies[1] to the wark,
And linkit[2] at it in her sark!
Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans
A' plump and strapping in their teens;
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,
Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linnen[3]
Thir[4] breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush, o' gude blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies,[5]
For ae blink o' the bonnie birdies!
But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwoodie hags, wad spean a foal,
Lowping and flinging on a crummock,[6]
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.
But Tam kend what wae what fu' brawlie,
"There was a winsome wench and walie,"
That night enlisted in the core,
(Lang after kend on Carrick shore;
For mony a beastie dead she shot,
And perished mony a bonnie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,[7]
And kept the country-side in fear)
Her cutty[8] sark, o' Paisley harn,[9]
That while a lassie, she had worn,
In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
It was her best and she was vauntie.—
Ah! little ken'd thy reverend grannie,
That sark she coft[10] for her wee Nannie,
Wi' twa pun Scots ('twas a' her riches,)
Wad ever grac'd a dance o' witches!
But here my muse her wing maun cour;
Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r;
To sing how Nannie lap and flang,
(A souple jade she was and strang),
And how Tam stood, like ane bewitch'd,
And thought his very e'en enrich'd;

[1] Clothes. [2] Tripped along.
[3] Fine linen, woven in a reed of 1700 divisions.—*Cromek.*
[4] These. [5] Loins [6] Short staff. [7] Barley. [8] Short.
[9] Very coarse linen. [10] Bought.

Even Satan glowr'd, and fidg'd fu' fain,
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main:
Till first ae caper, syne[1] anither,
Tam tint[2] his reason a' thegither,
And roars out, "weel done Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark;
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.
As bees bizz out wi angry fyke,[3]
When plundering herds assail their byke;[4]
As open pussie's mortal foes,
When pop she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' monie an eldritch skreech and hollow.
Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin!
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy coming!
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane[5] of the brig;
There at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they dare na cross.
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake!
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;[6]
But little wist she Maggie's mettle—
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain gray tail:
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

[1] Then. [2] Lost. [3] Bustle. [4] Hive.

[5] It is a well-known fact, that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream. It may be proper likewise to mention to the benighted traveller, that when he falls in with bogles, whatever danger may be in his going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back.—R. B. [6] Effort.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son take heed;
Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think ye may buy the joys o'er dear,
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

1789.

TO DR. BLACKLOCK.[1]

Ellisland, October 21, 1789.

Wow, but your letter made me vauntie!
And are ye hale, and weel, and cantie?
I kenned it still your wee bit jauntie
Wad bring ye to:
Lord send you aye as weel's I want ye,
And then ye'll do.

The ill-thief blaw the Heron[2] south!
And never drink be near his drouth!
He tauld myself, by word o'mouth,
He'd tak my letter;
I lippened[3] to the chiel in trouth,
And bade[4] nae better.

But what d'ye think my trusty fier?[5]
I'm turned a gauger[6]—Peace be here!
Parnassian queens, I fear, I fear
Ye'll now disdain me,
And then my fifty pounds a-year
Will little gain me.

[1] A blind poet, who induced Burns to go to Edinburgh instead of to the West Indies, to try his fortune as a poet.
[2] Mr. Heron, author of a "History of Scotland," 1800.
[3] Trusted. [4] Deserved. [5] Friend. [6] Exciseman.

Ye glaiket,[1] gleesome dainty damies,
Wha by Castalia's wimplin' streamies,
Lowp,[2] sing, and lave your pretty limbies,
Ye ken, ye ken,
That strang necessity supreme is
'Mang sons o' men.

I ha'e a wife and twa wee laddies,
They maun ha'e brose and brats o' duddies;[3]
Ye ken yoursels my heart right proud is,
I need na vaunt,
But I'll sned besoms[4]—thraw saugh woodies,[5]
Before they want.

Lord help me through this warld o' care!
I'm weary sick o't late and air!
Not but I ha'e a richer share
Than mony ithers;
But why should ae man better fare,
And a' men brithers?

Come, Firm Resolve, take thou the van,
Thou stalk o' carl-hemp[6] in man!
And let us mind, faint heart ne'er wan
A lady fair;
Who does the utmost that he can,
Will whyles do mair.

But to conclude my silly rhyme,
(I'm scant o' verse, and scant o' time)
To make a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.

[1] Foolish. [2] Jump. [3] Rags of clothes.
[4] Cut brooms. [5] Twist willow-withies.
[6] The seed-bearing hemp.

My compliments to sister Beckie;
And eke the same to honest Luckie,
I wat she is a dainty chuckie,
As e'er tread clay!
And gratefully, my guid auld cockie,
I'm yours for aye.
ROBERT BURNS.

1791.

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

Now Nature hangs her mantle green
On every blooming tree,
And spreads her sheets o' daisies white
Out owre the grassy lea:
Now Phœbus cheers the crystal streams,
And glads the azure skies;
But nought can glad the weary wight
That fast in durance lies.

Now lav'rocks[1] wake the merry morn,
Aloft on dewy wing;
The merle,[2] in his noontide bow'r,
Makes woodland echoes ring;
The mavis[3] mild wi' many a note,
Sings drowsy day to rest:
In love and freedom they rejoice,
Wi' care nor thrall opprest.

[1] Larks. [2] Blackbird. [3] Thrush.

Now blooms the lily by the bank,
The primrose down the brae;
The hawthorn's budding in the glen,
And milk-white is the slae;
The meanest hind in fair Scotland
May rove their sweets amang;
But I the Queen of a' Scotland,
Maun lie in prison strang.

I was the Queen o' bonnie France,
Where happy I hae been,
Fu' lightly rase I in the morn,
As blythe lay down at e'en:
And I'm the sov'reign of Scotland,
And mony a traitor there,
Yet here I lie in foreign bands,
And never-ending care.

But as for thee, thou false woman,
My sister and my fae,
Grim vengeance, yet, shall whet a sword
That thro' thy soul shall gae:
The weeping blood in woman's breast
Was never known to thee;
Nor th' balm that draps on wounds of woe
Frae woman's pitying e'e.

My son! my son! may kinder stars
Upon thy fortune shine;
And may those pleasures gild thy reign,
That ne'er wad blink on mine!
God keep thee frae thy mother's faes,
Or turn their hearts to thee;
And where thou meet'st thy mother's friend,
Remember him for me!

Oh! soon to me may summer-suns
  Nae mair light up the morn!
Nae mair, to me, the autumn winds
  Wave o'er the yellow corn!
And in the narrow house of death
  Let winter round me rave;
And the next flow'rs, that deck the spring,
  Bloom on my peaceful grave!

ELEGY ON THE LATE MISS BURNET, OF MONBODDO.

Life ne'er exulted in sa rich a prize
As Burnet, lovely from her native skies;
Nor envious death so triumph'd in a blow,
As that which laid th' accomplish'd Burnet low.

Thy form and mind, sweet maid, can I forget?
In richest ore the brightest jewel set!
In thee high Heaven above was truest shown,
As by his noblest work the Godhead best is known.

In vain ye flaunt in summer's pride, ye groves;
  Thou crystal streamlet with thy flowery shore,
Ye woodland choir that chant your idle loves,
  Ye cease to charm—Eliza is no more!

Ye heathy wastes, immixed with reedy fens;
  Ye mossy streams, with sedge and rushes stor'd;
Ye rugged cliffs o'erhanging dreary glens,
  To you I fly, ye with my soul accord.

Princes, whose cumbrous pride was all their worth,
  Shall venal lays their pompous exit hail?
And thou, sweet excellence! forsake our earth,
  And not a Muse in honest grief bewail?

We saw thee shine in youth and beauty's pride,
And virtue's light, that beams beyond the spheres;
But, like the sun eclips'd at morning tide,
Thou left'st us darkling in a world of tears.

The parent's heart that nestled fond in thee,
That heart how sunk, a prey to grief and care;
So deckt the woodbine sweet yon aged tree;
So, from it ravish'd, leaves it bleak and bare.

LAMENT FOR JAMES, EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

I AM a bending, agèd tree,
That long has stood the wind and rain;
But now has come a cruel blast,
And my last hald of earth is gane:
Nae leaf o' mine shall greet the spring,
Nae simmer sun exalt my bloom;
But I maun lie before the storm,
And ithers plant them in my room.

I've seen sae mony changefu' years,
On earth I am a stranger grown;
I wander in the ways of men,
Alike unknowing and unknown:
Unheard, unpitied, unrelieved,
I bear alane my lade o' care,
For silent, low, on beds of dust,
Lie a' that would my sorrows share.

And last, (the sum of a' my griefs!)
My noble master lies in clay;
The flower amang our barons bold,
His country's pride, his country's stay:
In weary being now I pine,
For a' the life of life is dead,
And hope has left my agèd ken,
On forward wing for ever fled.

Awake thy last sad voice my harp!
The voice of woe and wild despair!
Awake, resound thy latest lay,
Then sleep in silence evermair!
And thou, my last, best, only friend,
That fillest an untimely tomb,
Accept this tribute from the Bard
Thou brought from fortune's mirkest gloom.

In poverty's low, barren vale,
Thick mists, obscure, involved me round
Though oft I turned the wistful eye,
Nae ray of fame was to be found:
Thou found'st me, like the morning sun
That melts the fogs in limpid air,
The friendless Bard and rustic song,
Became alike thy fostering care.

Oh, why has worth so short a date?
While villains ripen grey with time!
Must thou, the noble, generous, great,
Fall in bold manhood's hardy prime!
Why did I live to see that day?
A day to me so full of woe!
Oh, had I met the mortal shaft
Which laid my benefactor low!

The bridegroom may forget the bride
Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee;
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a' that thou hast done for me.

ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON.

ON CROWNING HIS BUST AT EDNAM, ROXBURGHSHIRE, WITH BAYS.

WHILE virgin Spring, by Eden's flood,
Unfolds her tender mantle green,
Or pranks the sod in frolic mood,
Or tunes Eolian strains between:

While Summer, with a matron grace,
Retreats to Dryburgh's cooling shade,
Yet oft, delighted, stops to trace
The progress of the spiky blade:

While Autumn, benefactor kind,
By Tweed erects his agèd head,
And sees with self-approving mind,
Each creature on his bounty fed.

While maniac winter rages o'er
The hills whence classic Yarrow flows,
Rousing the turbid torrent's roar,
Or sweeping, wild, a waste of snows:

So long, sweet Poet of the year,
Shall bloom that wreath thou well hast won;
While Scotia, with exulting tear,
Proclaims that Thomson was her son.

1743.

ON SENSIBILITY. TO MY DEAR AND MUCH-HONOURED FRIEND, MRS. DUNLOP, OF DUNLOP.

AIR—"SENSIBILITY."

SENSIBILITY, how charming,
Thou my friend canst truly tell;
But distress, with horrors arming,
Thou hast also known too well,

Fairest flower, behold the lily,
Blooming in the sunny ray:
Let the blast sweep o'er the valley,
See it prostrate on the clay.

Hear the wood-lark charm the forest,
Telling o'er his little joys;
Hapless bird! a prey the surest
To each pirate of the skies.

Dearly bought the hidden treasure
Finer feelings can bestow;
Chords, that vibrate sweetest pleasure,
Thrill the deepest notes of woe.

SONNET, ON HEARING A THRUSH SING IN A MORNING WALK; WRITTEN JANUARY 25TH 1793, THE BIRTHDAY OF THE AUTHOR, R. B., AGED 34.

SING on, sweet Thrush, upon the leafless bough;
Sing on, sweet bird, I listen to thy strain:
See aged winter, 'mid his surly reign,
At thy blithe carol clears his furrow'd brow.

So in lone Poverty's dominion drear
Sits meek Content with light unanxious heart,
Welcomes the rapid moments, bids them part,
Nor asks if they bring aught to hope or fear.

I thank thee, Author of this opening day!
Thou whose bright sun now gilds the orient skies!
Riches denied, thy boon was purer joys,
What wealth could never give, nor take away!

Yet come, thou child of poverty and care;
The mite high heav'n bestowed, that mite with thee
I'll share.

A VISION.[1]

As I stood by yon roofless tower,
Where the wa'-flower scents the dewy air,
Where the howlet mourns in her ivy bower,
And tells the midnight moon her care.

The winds were laid, the air was still,
The stars they shot alang the sky;
The fox was howling on the hill,
And the distant echoing glens reply.

The stream, adown its hazelly path,
Was rushing by the ruined wa's
Hasting to join the sweeping Nith,
Whase distant roaring swells and fa's.

The cauld blue north was streaming forth
Her lights wi' hissing eerie din,
Athort the lift they start and shift,
Like fortune's favours, tint as win.[2]

[1] This is the second poem suggested by the ruins of Lincluden Abbey.
[2] Lost as soon as won.

[1]By heedless chance I turned mine eyes,
And by the moonbeam shook to see
A stern and stalwart ghaist arise,
Attired as minstrels wont to be.

Had I a statue been o' stane,
His darin' look had daunted me;
And on his bonnet graved was plain,
The sacred posie—Libertie!

And frae his harp sic strains did flow,
Might roused the slumbering dead to hear;
But oh, it was a tale of woe,
As ever met a Briton's ear!

He sang wi' joy the former day,
He weeping wailed his latter times;
But what he said it was nae play,
I winna ventur't in my rhymes.

VERSES,

ON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WOODS NEAR DRUMLANRIG.[2]

As on the banks o' wandering Nith
Ae smiling summer morn I strayed,
And traced its bonny howes and haughs
Where linties sang and lambkins played,
I sat me down upon a craig,
And drank my fill o' fancy's dream,
When, from the eddying deep below
Uprose the genius of the stream.

[1] Variation: Now looking over firth and fauld,
Her horn the pale-faced Cynthia reared
When, lo, in form of minstrel auld,
A stern and stalwart ghaist appeared.

[2] The Duke of Queensbury cut down these woods to enrich his mistress, the countess of Yarmouth, by their sale.

Dark, like the frowning rock, his brow,
And troubled like his wintry wave,
And deep as sughs[1] the boding wind
Amang his eaves, the sigh he gave—
"And came ye here, my son," he cried,
"To wander in my birken shade?
To muse some favourite Scottish theme,
Or sing some favourite Scottish maid?

"There was a time, it's nae lang syne,[2]
Ye might ha'e seen me in my pride,
When a' my banks sae bravely saw
Their woody pictures in my tide;
When hanging beech and spreading elm
Shaded my stream sae clear and cool;
And stately oaks their twisted arms
Threw broad and dark across the pool.

"When glinting through the trees appeared
The wee white cot aboon the mill,
And peacefu' rose its ingle reek,[3]
That slowly curlèd up the hill.
But now the cot is bare and cauld,
Its branchy shelter's lost and gane.
And scarce a stinted birk is left
To shiver in the blast its lane."

"Alas" said I, what ruefu' chance
Has twined[4] ye o' your stately trees?
Has laid your rocky bosom bare?
Has stripped the cleeding[5] o' your braes?
Was it the bitter eastern blast,
That scatters blight in early spring?
Or wast't the wil'-fire scorched their boughs,
Or canker-worm wi' secret sting?

[1] Moans. [2] Since. [3] Smoke. [4] Deprive. [5] Clothing.

"Nae eastlin' blast," the sprite replied;
"It blew na here sae fierce and fell;
And on my dry and halesome banks
Nae canker-worms get leave to dwell:
Man! cruel Man!" the genius sighed,
As through the cliffs he sank him down—
"The worm that gnawed my bonny trees,
That reptile wears a ducal crown!

TO A KISS.

HUMID seal of soft affections,
Tenderest pledge of future bliss,
Dearest tie of young connexions,
Love's first snowdrop, virgin kiss!

Speaking silence, dumb confession,
Passion's birth, and infants' play,
Dove-like fondness, chaste concession,
Glowing dawn of brighter day!

Sorrowing joy, adieu's last action,
When lingering lips no more must join,
What words can ever speak affection
So thrilling and sincere as thine!

THE HERMIT [1]

WHOE'ER thou art, these lines now reading,
Think not, though from the world receding,
I joy my lonely days to read in
This desert drear,—
That fell remorse, a conscience bleeding,
Hath led me here.

[1] Written on a marble sideboard, in the Hermitage belonging to the Duke of Athole, in the wood of Aberfeldy.

No thought of guilt my bosom sours—
Free-will'd I fled from courtly bow'rs;
For well I saw in halls and tow'rs,
That lust and pride,
The arch fiend's dearest, darkest pow'rs,
In state preside.

I saw mankind with vice encrusted;
I saw that honour's sword was rusted;
That few for aught but folly lusted;
That he was still deceiv'd, who trusted
To love or friend;—
And hither came, with men disgusted,
My life to end.

In this lone cave, in garments lowly,
Alike a foe to noisy folly,
And brow-brent, gloomy melancholy,
I wear away
My life, and in my office holy
Consume the day.

This rock my shield, when storms are blowing,
The limpid streamlet yonder flowing,
Supplying drink, the earth bestowing
My simple food;
But few enjoy the calm I know, in
This desert wood.

Content and comfort bless me more in
This grot, than e'er I felt before in
A palace,—and with thoughts still soaring
To God on high,
Each night and morn with voice imploring,
This wish I sigh:—

Let me, O Lord, from life retire,
Unknown each guilty, worldly fire,

Remorse's throb, or loose desire;
And when I die,
Let me in this belief expire—
To God I fly!

Stranger! if full of youth and riot,
And yet no grief has marr'd thy quiet,
Thou haply throw'st a scornful eye at
The Hermit's prayer;
But if thou hast good cause to sigh at
Thy fault or care,—

If thou hast known false love's vexation,
Or hast been exiled from thy nation,
Or guilt affrights thy contemplation,
And makes thee pine—
Oh! how must thou lament thy station,
And envy mine!

FIRST EPISTLE TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ., OF FINTRY.[1]

When Nature her great masterpiece designed,
And framed her last, best work, the human mind,
Her eye intent on all the mazy plan,
She formed of various parts the various man.
Then first she calls the useful many forth;
Plain, plodding industry, and sober worth:
Thence peasants, farmers, native sons of earth,

[1] Mr. Graham was one of the Poet's best friends. He obtained for him (all he could) an appointment in the Excise; and when Burns was accused of disloyalty, he defended him boldly and well.

"I enclose you an essay of mine in a walk of poesy to me entirely new. I mean the Epistle addressed to Robert Graham, Esq., of Fintry, a gentleman of uncommon worth, to whom I lie under very great obligations. This story of the poem, like most of my poems, is connected with my own story, and to give you the one, I must give you something of the other."

And merchandise' whole genus take their birth;
Each prudent cit a warm existence finds,
And all mechanics' many-aproned kinds.
Some other rarer sorts are wanted yet,
The lead and buoy are needful to the net;
The *caput mortuum* of gross desires
Makes a material for mere knights and squires;
The martial phosphorus is taught to flow:
She kneads the lumpish philosophic dough,
Then marks th' unyielding mass with grave designs,
Law, physic, politics, and deep divines:
Last she sublimes th' Aurora of the poles,
The flashing elements of female souls.

The ordered system fair before her stood,
Nature, well pleased, pronounced it very good;
But ere she gave creating labour o'er
Half-jest, she tried one curious labour more.
Some spumy, fiery, *ignis fatuus* matter,
Such as the slightest breath of air might scatter;
With arch alacrity and conscious glee
(Nature may have her whim as well as we,
Her Hogarth-art perhaps she meant to show it)
She forms the thing, and christens it—a poet;
Creature, though oft the prey of care and sorrow,
When blest to-day, unmindful of to-morrow;
A being formed t' amuse his graver friends,
Admired and praised—and there the homage ends:

A mortal quite unfit for Fortune's strife,
Yet oft the sport of all the ills of life;
Prone to enjoy each pleasure riches give,
Yet haply wanting wherewithal to live;
Longing to wipe each tear, to heal each groan,
Yet frequent all unheeded in his own;
But honest Nature is not quite a Turk,
She laughed at first, then felt for her poor work.
Pitying the propless climber of mankind,
She cast about a standard tree to find;
And to support his helpless, woodbine state,

Attached him to the generous truly great,—
A title, and the only one I claim,
To lay strong hold for help on bounteous Graham.

Pity the tuneful Muses' hapless train,
Weak, timid landsmen on life's stormy main!
Their hearts no selfish, stern, absorbent stuff,
That never gives—though humbly takes enough;
The little Fate allows, they share as soon,
Unlike sage, proverbed Wisdom's hard-wrung boon.
The world were blest did bliss on them depend,—
Ah, that "the friendly e'er should want a friend!"
Let prudence number o'er each sturdy son,
Who life and wisdom at one race begun,
Who feel by reason and who give by rule,
(Instinct's a brute, and sentiment a fool!)
Who make poor "will do" wait upon "I should"—
We own they're prudent, but who feels they're good?
Ye wise ones, hence! ye hurt the social eye!
God's image rudely etched on base alloy!
But come ye who the godlike pleasure know,
Heaven's attribute distinguished—to bestow!
Whose arms of love would grasp the human race:
Come, thou who giv'st with all a courtier's grace;
Friend of my life, true patron of my rhymes!
Prop of my dearest hopes for future times.
Why shrinks my soul, half blushing, half afraid,
Backward abashed to ask thy friendly aid?
I know my need, I know thy giving hand,
I crave thy friendship at thy kind command;
But there are such who court the tuneful Nine—
Heavens! should the branded character be mine!
Whose verse in manhood's pride sublimely flows,
Yet vilest reptiles in their begging prose.
Mark, how their lofty independent spirit
Soars on the spurning wing of injured merit!
Seek not the proofs in private life to find;
Pity the best of words should be but wind!
So to heaven's gates the lark's shrill song ascends,
But grovelling on the earth the carol ends.

In all the clam'rous cry of starving want,
They dun benevolence with shameless front;
Oblige them, patronize their tinsel lays,
They persecute you all your future days!
Ere my poor soul such deep damnation stain,
My horny fist assume the plough again;
The piebald jacket let me patch once more;
On eighteen-pence a week I've lived before.
Though, thanks to Heaven, I dare even that last shift!
I trust, meantime, my boon is in thy gift:
That placed by thee upon the wished-for height,
Where, man and nature fairer in her sight
My muse may imp her wing for some sublimer flight.

SECOND EPISTLE TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ., OF FINTRY,

ON THE CLOSE OF THE DISPUTED ELECTION BETWEEN SIR JAMES JOHNSTONE AND CAPTAIN MILLER, FOR THE DUMFRIES DISTRICT OF BOROUGHS.

FINTRY, my stay in worldly strife,
Friend o' my Muse, friend o' my life,
Are ye as idle 's I am?
Come then, wi' uncouth, kintra fleg,
O'er Pegasus I'll fling my leg,
And ye shall see me try him.

I'll sing the zeal Drumlanrig[1] bears
Wha left the all-important cares
Of princes and their darlins;
And, bent on winning borough touns,
Came shaking hands wi' wabster louns,
And kissing barefit carlins.[2]

[1] The fourth Duke of Queensberry, of infamous memory.
[2] Bare-footed old women.

Combustion through our boroughs rode,
Whistling his roaring pack abroad,
Of mad, unmuzzled lions;
As Queensbury "buff and blue" unfurled,
And Westerha'[1] and Hopeton hurled
To every Whig defiance.

But cautious Queensberry left the war,
Th' unmannered dust might soil his star:
Besides, he hated bleeding:
But left behind him heroes bright,
Heroes in Cæsarean fight,
Or Ciceronian pleading.

O! for a throat like huge Mons-meg,[2]
To muster o'er each ardent Whig
Beneath Drumlanrig's banners;
Heroes and heroines commix,
All in the field of politics,
To win immortal honours.

M'Murdo[3] and his lovely spouse,
(The enamoured laurels kiss her brows!)
Led on the loves and graces:
She won each gaping burgess' heart,
While he, all-conquering, played his part
Among their wives and lasses.

Craigdarroch[4] led a light-armed corps;
Tropes, metaphors, and figures pour,
Like Hecla streaming thunder:
Glenriddel[5] skilled in rusty coins,
Blew up each Tory's dark designs,
And bared the treason under.

[1] Sir James Johnstone, the Tory candidate.
[2] A large old cannon in Edinburgh Castle.
[3] The Chamberlain of the Duke of Queensberry at Drumlanrig.
[4] Ferguson of Craigdarroch.
[5] Captain Riddel of Glenriddel, a friend of the Poet.

In either wing two champions fought,
Redoubted Staig,[1] who set at nought
The wildest savage Tory:
And Welsh[2] who ne'er yet flinched his ground,
High-waved his magnum bonum round
With Cyclopean fury.

Miller brought up th' artillery ranks,
The many-pounders of the Banks,
Resistless desolation!
While Maxwelton, that baron bold,
'Mid Lawson's[3] port entrenched his hold,
And threatened worse damnation.

To these, what Tory hosts opposed:
With these, what Tory warriors closed,
Surpasses my describing:
Squadrons extended long and large,
With furious speed rushed to the charge,
Like raging devils driving.

What verse can sing, what prose narrate,
The butcher deeds of bloody fate
Amid this mighty tulzie!
Grim Horror grinned—pale terror roared,
As Murther at his thrapple[4] shored,
And Hell mixed in the brulzie!

As highland crags by thunder cleft,
When lightnings fire the stormy lift,
Hurled down wi' crashing rattle:
As flames amang a hundred woods;
As headlong foam a hundred floods:
Such is the rage of battle!

The stubborn Tories dare to die;
As soon the rooted oaks would fly
Before th' approaching fellers:

[1] Provost Staig of Dumfries. [2] Sheriff Welsh.
[3] Lawson, a wine merchant in Dumfries. [4] Throat.

The Whigs come on like Ocean's roar,
When all his wintry billows pour
Against the Buchan Bullers.[1]

Lo! from the shades of Death's deep night,
Departed Whigs enjoy the fight,
And think on former daring:
The muffled murtherer[2] of Charles
The Magna Charta flag unfurls,
All deadly gules its bearing.

Nor wanting ghosts of Tory fame,
Bold Scrimgeour[3] follows gallant Grahame,
Auld Covenanters shiver.
(Forgive, forgive, much wronged Montrose![4]
While death and hell engulph thy foes,
Thou liv'st on high for ever!)

Still o'er the field the combat burns,
The Tories, Whigs, give way by turns;
But Fate the word has spoken;
For woman's wit and strength o' man,
Alas! can do but what they can—
The Tory ranks are broken!

O that my een were flowing burns!
My voice a lioness that mourns
Her darling cubs' undoing!
That I might greet, that I might cry,
While Tories fall, while Tories fly,
And furious Whigs pursuing!

[1] A rocky recess near Peterhead. The sea, raging in it, gives it the appearance of a pot or boiler.
[2] The executioner of Charles I. was masked.
[3] John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee.
[4] The great Marquis of Montrose.

What Whig but wails the good Sir James?
Dear to his country by the names
Friend, patron, benefactor!
Not Pulteney's wealth can Pulteney save!
And Hopeton falls the generous brave!
And Stewart,[1] bold as Hector.

Thou, Pitt, shalt rue this overthrowe;
And Thurlow growl a curse of woe:
And Melville melt in wailing!
Now Fox and Sheridan rejoice!
And Burke shall sing, "O Prince, arise!
Thy power is all prevailing."

For your poor friend, the Bard, afar
He hears, and only hears, the war,
A cool spectator purely:
So, when the storm the forest rends,
The robin in the hedge descends,
And sober chirps securely.

The third Epistle to R. Graham, will be found on page 52.

FOURTH EPISTLE TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ., OF FINTRY.

I CALL no goddess to inspire my strains,
A fabled Muse may suit a bard that feigns;
Friend of my life! my ardent spirit burns,
And all the tribute of my heart returns,
For boons accorded, goodness ever new,
The gift still dearer, as the giver, you.
Thou orb of day! thou other pa'er light!
And all the other sparkling stars of night;
If aught that giver from my mind efface;
If I that giver's bounty e'er disgrace,
Then roll to me along your wandering spheres,
Only to number out a villain's years!

[1] Stewart of Hillside.

EPISTLE TO HUGH PARKER.[1]

In this strange land, this uncouth clime,
A land unknown to prose or rhyme;
Where words ne'er crost the Muse's heckles,[2]
Nor limpit in poetic shackles;
A land that prose did never view it,
Except when drunk he stacher't through it:
Here ambushed by the chimla[3] cheek,
Hid in an atmosphere of reek,
I hear a wheel thrum i' the neuk,
I hear it—for in vain I leuk.
The red peat gleams, a fiery kernel,
Enhusked by a fog infernal:
Here, for my wonted rhyming raptures,
I sit and count my sins by chapters;
For life and spunk like ither Christians,
I'm dwindled down to mere existence;
Wi na converse but Gallowa' bodies,
Wi' nae kenned face but Jenny Geddes.[4]
Jenny, my Pegasean pride!
Dowie she saunters down Nithside,
And aye a westlin' leuk she throws,
While tears hap o'er her auld brown nose!
Was it for this, wi' canny care,
Thou bure the Bard through many a shire?
At howes[5] or hillocks never stumbled,
And late or early never grumbled?
Oh, had I power like inclination,
I'd heeze thee up a constellation,
To canter with the Sagitarre,
Or loup the ecliptic like a bar;
Or turn the pole like any arrow;
Or, when auld Phœbus bids good-morrow,

[1] This epistle, dated June, 1788, was addressed to Mr. Hugh Parker, merchant, in Kilmarnock, one of the Poet's earliest friends and patrons. Mr. Parker subscribed for thirty copies of the Poet's Works.

[2] Sharp-pointed spikes used for dressing flax. [3] Chimney.

[4] His mare. [5] Hollows.

Down the zodiac urge the race,
And cast dirt on his godship's face;
For I could lay my bread and kail
He'd ne'er cast saut upo' my tail.—
Wi' a' this care and a' this grief,
And sma', sma' prospect of relief,
And nought but peat-reek i' my head,
How can I write what ye can read?—
Tarbolton, twenty-fourth o' June,
Ye'll find me in a better tune;
But till we meet and weet our whistle,
Tak' this excuse for nae epistle.

ROBERT BURNS.

TO A HAGGIS.[1]

FAIR fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great chieftain o' the puddin' race!
Aboon them a' ye tak' your place,
Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy of a grace
As lang's my arm.

The groaning trencher there ye fill
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your pin[2] wad help to mend a mill
In time o' need;
While through your pores the dews distil
Like amber bead.

His knife see rustic Labour dight,[3]
An cut you up with ready slight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
Like onie ditch;
And then, oh, what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin', rich!

[1] The Haggis is made of minced mutton, meal, suet, and seasoning, tied up in a sheep's stomach and boiled in it.
[2] Skewer. [3] Wipe.

Then horn for horn they stretch an' strive,
De'il tak' the hindmost! on they drive,
Till a' their weel swalled kytes[1] belyve[2]
Are bent like drums:
Then auld guidman, maist like to ryve,[3]
Bethankit hums.

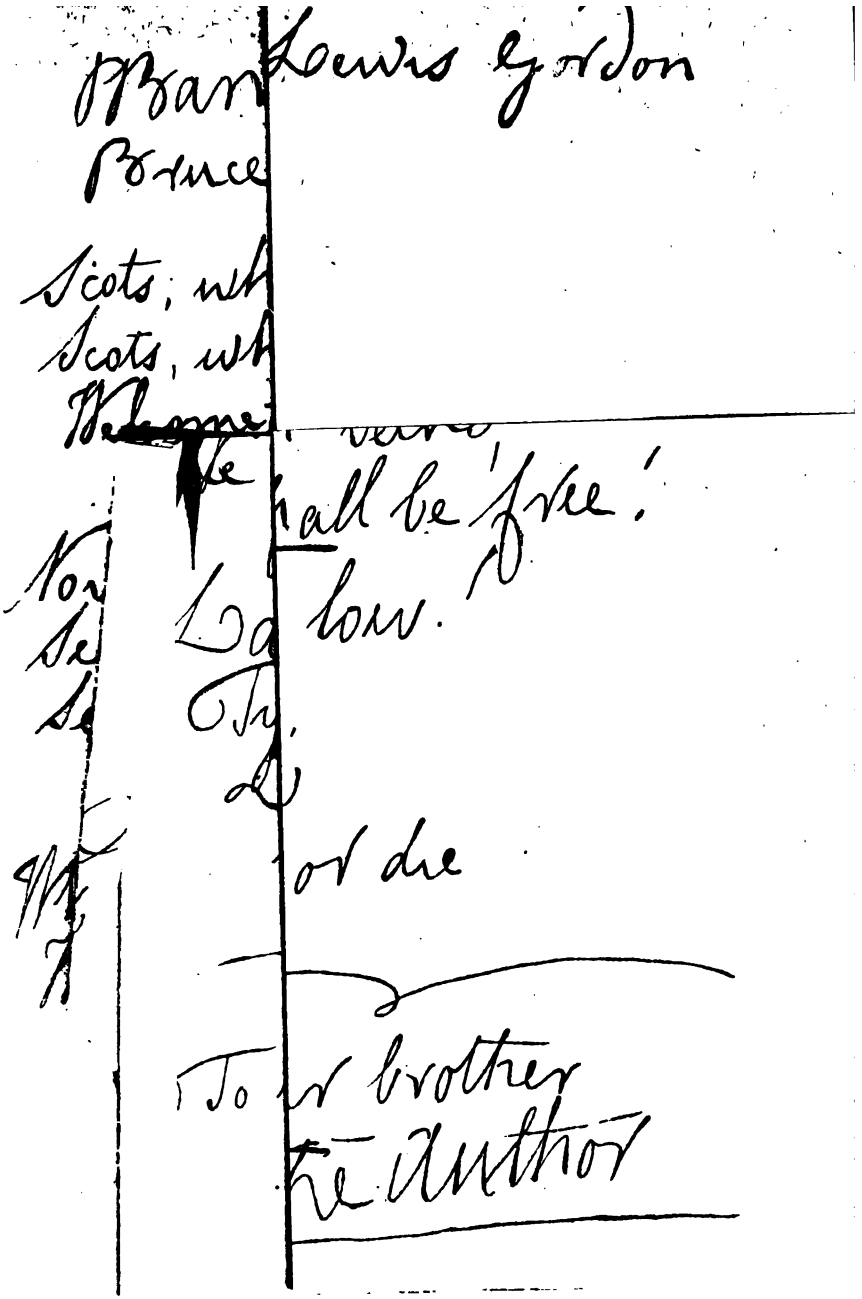
Is there that o'er his French ragoût
Or olio that wad staw a sow,
Or fricassée wad mak' her spew
Wi' perfect sconner,[4]
Looks down sneering, scornfu' view
On sic a dinner?

Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckless[5] as a withered rash,[6]
His spindle shank a guid whip-lash,
His nieve[7] a nit;
Through bloody flood or field to dash,
Oh, how unfit!

But mark the rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his walie nieve[8] a blade,
He'll mak' it whissle;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned,[9]
Like taps o' thristle.[10]

Ye Powers, wha mak' mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware[11]
That jaups in luggies;[12]
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer
Gi'e her a Haggis!

[1] Stomachs. [2] By and by. [3] Burst.
[4] Loathing. [5] Pithless. [6] Rush.
[7] Fist. [8] Large fist. [9] Cut off.
[10] Tops of thistles. [11] Thin stuff.
[12] That splashes in bowls.


Lewis Gordon
Bruce
Scots, wh
Scots, wh
shall be free!
Lo
low.
Th
or die
To
r brother
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Songs.

MY HANDSOME NELL.[1]

Tune—"I am a man Unmarried."

O, once I loved a bonnie lass,
Ay, and I love her still;
And whilst that virtue warms my breast
I'll love my handsome Nell.
Fal, lal de ral, &c.

As bonnie lasses I ha'e seen,
And mony full as braw;
But for a modest, gracefu' mien,
The like I never saw.

A bonnie lass, I will confess,
Is pleasant to the e'e,
But without some better qualities
She's no a lass for me.

[1] For my own part, I never had the least thought or inclination of turning poet till I got once heartily in love, and then rhyme and song were, in a manner, the spontaneous language of my heart. The following composition was the first of my performances, and done at an early period of my life, when my heart glowed with honest, warm simplicity; unacquainted and uncorrupted with the ways of a wicked world. The performance is, indeed, very puerile and silly; but I am always pleased with it, as it recals to my mind those happy days when my heart was yet honest and my tongue was sincere. The subject of it was a young girl who really deserved all the praises I have bestowed upon her.—R.B. She was the poet's companion in the harvest-field.

But Nelly's looks are blithe and sweet;
And, what is best of a',
Her reputation is complete,
And fair without a flaw.

She dresses aye sae clean and neat,
Baith decent and genteel;
And then there's something in her gait
Gars[1] ony dress look weel.[2]

A gaudy dress and gentle air
May slightly touch the heart;
But it's innocence and Modesty
That polishes the dart.

'Tis this in Nelly pleases me,
'Tis this enchants my soul!
For absolutely in my breast
She reigns without control.

THE LASS O' BALLOCHMYLE.[3]

Tune—"Miss Forbes's farewell to Banff."

'TWAS even—the dewy fields were green,
On every blade the pearls hang,
The Zephyrs wanton'd round the bean,
And bore its fragrant sweets alang:
In every glen the Mavis sang,
All nature listening seemed the while,
Except where green-wood echoes rang,
Amang the braes o' Ballochmyle.

[1] Makes.

[2] The thoughts in the fifth stanza come finely up to my favourite idea—a sweet sonsie lass.—R. B.

[3] "Miss Alexander, whose brother had recently come to reside in Ballochmyle House, of which the pleasure grounds extend along the north bank of the Ayr. The farm of Burns,—Mossgiel, was in the immediate neighbourhood. He inclosed a copy of the song to Miss Alexander. I think myself," he told Mrs. Stewart of Stair, "it has some merit, both as a tolerable description of one of Nature's scenes—a July evening, and one of the finest pieces of Nature's workmanship,—the finest indeed we know anything of—an amiable, beautiful young woman.

With careless step I onward stray'd,
My heart rejoic'd in nature's joy,
When musing in a lonely glade,
A maiden fair I chanc'd to spy;
Her look was like the morning's eye
Her air like nature's vernal smile,
Perfection whisper'd, passing by,
"Behold the Lass o' Ballochmyle!"

Fair is the morn in flowery May,
And sweet is night in Autumn mild,
When roving thro' the garden gay,
Or wandering in a lonely wild:
But woman, Nature's darling child!
There all her charms she does compile;
Ev'n there her other works are foil'd
By the bonnie Lass o' Ballochmyle.

O, had she been a country maid,
And I the happy country swain,
Tho' shelter'd in the lowest shed
That ever rose in Scotland's plain:
Thro' weary Winter's wind and rain,
With joy, with rapture, I would toil;
And nightly to my bosom strain
The bonnie Lass o' Ballochmyle.

Then pride might climb the slipp'ry steep,
Where fame and honours lofty shine;
And thirst of gold might tempt the deep,
Or downward seek the Indian mine:
Give me the cot below the pine,
To tend the flocks or till the soil,
And every day have joys divine,
With the bonnie Lass o' Ballochmyle.

[1] Under the above song is written "Miss Willie Alexander."

SONG OF DEATH.[1]

A Gaelic Air.

FAREWELL, thou fair day, thou green earth, and ye skies,
Now gay with the broad setting sun!
Farewell, loves and friendships, ye dear, tender ties,
Our race of existence is run!

Thou grim King of Terrors, thou life's gloomy foe!
Go, frighten the coward and slave!
Go, teach them to tremble, fell tyrant! but know,
No terrors hast thou for the brave!

Thou strik'st the dull peasant—he sinks in the dark,
Nor saves e'en the wreck of a name;
Thou strik'st the young hero—a glorious mark!
He falls in the blaze of his fame!

In the field of proud honour—our swords in our hands,
Our King and our Country to save—
While victory shines on life's last ebbing sands,
O! who would not die with the brave!

I DREAM'D I LAY WHERE FLOWERS WERE SPRINGING.[2]

I DREAM'D I lay where flowers were springing
Gaily in the sunny beam;
List'ning to the wild birds singing,
By a falling, crystal stream:
Straight the sky grew black and daring:
Thro' the woods the whirlwinds rave;
Trees with aged arms were warring,
O'er the swelling, drumlie[3] wave.

[1] When the pressing nature of public affairs called, in 1795, for a general arming of the people, Burns appeared in the ranks of the "Dumfries Volunteers," employed his poetical talents in stimulating their patriotism; and at this season of alarm he brought forward the following hymn.—(CURRIE.) The song was written in 1791.

[2] Written in the poet's eighteenth year. [3] Muddy.

Such was my life's deceitful morning,
  Such the pleasures I enjoy'd;
But lang or noon, loud tempests, storming,
  A' my flowery bliss destroy'd.
Tho' fickle fortune has deceived me,
  She promised fair, and perform'd but ill
Of monie a joy and hope bereav'd me,
  I bear a heart shall support me still.

MY BONNIE MARY.

Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine,
  An' fill it in a silver tassie;[1]
That I may drink before I go,
  A service to my bonnie lassie.
The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith;
  Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry;
The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
  And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
  The glittering spears are ranked ready;
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
  The battle closes thick and bloody;
But it's no the roar o' sea or shore
  Wad make me langer wish to tarry;
Nor shout o' war that's heard afar,—
  It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.

[1] Measure.

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS.[1]

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.
Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birthplace of valour, the country of worth:
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Farewell to the mountains high cover'd with snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forest and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.
My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,—
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.

TO THE OWL.

BY JOHN M'CREDDIE.[2]

Sad Bird of Night, what sorrow calls thee forth,
To vent thy plaints thus in the midnight hour;
Is it some blast that gathers in the north,
Threat'ning to nip the verdure of thy bow'r?

Is it, sad Owl, that Autumn strips the shade,
And leaves thee here, unsheltered and forlorn?
Or fear that Winter will thy nest invade?
Or friendly Melancholy bids thee mourn?

[1] The first half stanza of this song is old, the rest is mine. R. B.
[2] Mr. M'Creddie is supposed to be a myth, the verses having been found in the hand-writing of Burns.

Shut out, lone bird, from all the feather'd train,
To tell thy sorrows to th' unheeding gloom;
No friend to pity when thou dost complain,
Grief all thy thought, and solitude thy home.

Sing on, sad mourner! I will bless thy strain,
And, pleased in sorrow, listen to thy song:
Sing on sad mourner! To the night complain,
While the lone echo wafts thy notes along.

Is beauty less when down the glowing cheek
Sad, piteous tears in native sorrows fall?
Less kind the heart, when Sorrow bids it break?
Less happy he who lists to Pity's call?

Ah no, sad Owl! nor is thy voice less sweet,
That Sadness tunes it, and that Grief is there;
That Spring's gay notes, unskill'd, thou canst repeat;
And Sorrow bids thee to the gloom repair.

Nor that the treble songsters of the day,
Are quite estranged, sad bird of night! from thee;
Nor that the thrush deserts the evening spray,
When darkness calls thee from thy reverie.

From some old tower, thy melancholy dome,
While the grey walls and desert solitudes
Return each note, responsive, to the gloom
Of ivied coverts and surrounding woods;

There hooting, I will list more pleased to thee,
Than ever lover to the nightingale;
Or drooping wretch, oppress'd with misery,
Lending his ear to some condoling tale.

M'PHERSON'S[1] FAREWELL.

FAREWELL, ye dungeons dark and strong,
The wretch's destinie:
M'Pherson's time will not be long
On yonder gallows tree.

CHORUS.

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he;
He play'd a spring and danc'd it round,
Below the gallows tree.

Oh, what is death but parting breath?—
On monie a bloody plain
I've dar'd his face, and in this place
I scorn him yet again!
Sae rantingly, &c.

Untie these bands from off my hands,
And bring to me my sword!
And there's no man in all Scotland,
But I'll brave him at a word.
Sae rantingly, &c.

I've liv'd a life of sturt[2] and strife;
I die by treachery:
It burns my heart I must depart
And not avenged be.
Sae rantingly, &c.

Now farewell light, thou sunshine bright,
And all beneath the sky!
May coward shame distain his name,
The wretch that dare not die!
Sae rantingly, &c.

[1] A noted Highland robber, whose daring is portrayed in the verses. He broke his violin at the foot of the gallows. [2] Trouble

AULD ROB MORRIS.

THERE'S auld Rob Morris that wons[1] in yon glen,
He's the king o' guid fellows and wale of auld men;
He has gowd in his coffers, he has owsen[2] and kine,
And ae bonnie lassie, his darling and mine.

She's fresh as the morning, the fairest in May;
She's sweet as the evening amang the new hay;
As blythe and as artless as lamb on the lea,
And dear to my heart, as the light to my e'e.

But oh! she's an heiress, auld Robin's a laird,
And my daddie has nought but a cot-house and yard;
A wooer like me maunna hope to come speed;
The wound I must hide that will soon be my dead.

The day comes to me, but delight brings me nane;
The night comes to me, but my rest it is gane:
I wander my lane, like a night-troubled ghaist,
And I sigh as my heart it wad burst in my breast.

O had she but been of a lower degree,
I then might hae hop'd she wad smil'd upon me;
O how past describing had then been my bliss,
As now my distraction no words can express!

DUNCAN GRAY.[3]

DUNCAN GRAY came here to woo,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't,
On blythe yule[4] night when we were fou
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Maggie coost[5] her head fu' high,
Look'd asklent and unco skeigh,[6]
Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh;[7]
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

[1] Dwells. [2] Oxen.

[3] "Duncan Gray" is that kind of light-horse gallop of an air which precludes sentiment. The ludicrous is its ruling feature.—BURNS *Thomson.*

[4] Christmas. [5] Tossed. [6] Proud. [7] At a shy distance.

Duncan fleech'd[1] and Duncan pray'd,
Ha, ha, &c.
Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig,
Ha, ha, &c.
Duncan sigh'd baith out and in,
Grat his een baith bleer't and blin',[2]
Spak o' lowpin o'er a linn;[3]
Ha, ha, &c.

Time and chance are but a tide,
Ha, ha, &c.
Slighted love is sair to bide,
Ha, ha, &c.
Shall I, like a fool, quoth he,
For a haughty hizzie die?
She may gae to—France for me!
Ha, ha, &c.

How it comes let doctors tell,
Ha, ha, &c.
Meg grew sick—as he grew well,
Ha, ha, &c.
Something in her bosom wrings,
For relief a sigh she brings;
And O, her een, they spak sic things!
Ha, ha, &c.

Duncan was a lad o' grace,
Ha, ha, &c.
Maggie's was a piteous case,
Ha, ha, &c.
Duncan couldna be her death,
Swelling pity smoor'd[4] his wrath;
Now they're crouse and cantie[5] baith.
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

[1] Besought. [2] Bleared and blind. [3] Precipice. [4] Smothered.
[5] Cheerful and merry.

O POORTITH.

Tune—"I had a horse."

O POORTITH cauld, and restless love,
Ye wreck my peace, between ye;
Yet poortith a' I could forgive,
An' 't were na for my Jeanie.
O why should fate sic pleasure have,
Life's dearest bands untwining?
Or why sae sweet a flower as love
Depend on Fortune's shining?

This warld's wealth when I think on,
Its pride, and a' the lave o't;
Fie, fie on silly coward man,
That he should be the slave o't.
O why, &c.

Her een sae bonnie blue betray
How she repays my passion;
But prudence is her o'erword aye,
She talks of rank and fashion.
O why, &c.

O wha can prudence think upon,
And sic a lassie by him?
O wha can prudence think upon,
And sae in love as I am?
O why, &c.

How blest the humble cotter's fate!
He woos his simple dearie;
The sillie bogles,[1] wealth and state,
Can never make them eerie.
O why should fate sic pleasure have,
Life's dearest bands untwining?
Or why sae sweet a flower as love
Depend on Fortune's shining?

[1] Hobgoblins.

GALLA WATER.

THERE's braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes,
That wander thro' the blooming heather;
But Yarrow braes, nor Ettric shaws,
Can match the lads o' Galla water.

But there is ane, a secret ane,
Aboon them a' I lo'e him better;
And I'll be his, and he'll be mine,
The bonnie lad o' Galla Water.

Altho' his daddie was nae laird,
And tho' I hae nae meikle tocher;[1]
Yet rich in kindest, truest love,
We'll tent our flocks by Galla water.

It ne'er was wealth, it ne'er was wealth,
That coft[2] contentment, peace, or pleasure;
The bands and bliss o' mutual love,
Oh, that's the chiefest warld's treasure!

LORD GREGORY.[3]

O MIRK, mirk is this midnight hour,
And loud the tempest's roar;
A waefu' wanderer seeks thy tow'r,
Lord Gregory,—ope thy door.

An exile frae her father's ha',
And a' for loving thee;
At least some pity on me shaw,
If love it mayna be.

[1] Marriage portion. [2] Bought.

[3] A friend of Burns writes—"We had the song of Lord Gregory," which I asked for to have an opportunity of calling on Burns to recite his ballad to us. He did recite it, and such was the effect that a dead silence ensued."

Lord Gregory, mind'st thou not the grove,
By bonnie Irwine side,
Where first I own'd that virgin-love,
I lang, lang had denied?

How aften didst thou pledge and vow,
Thou wad for aye be mine!
And my fond heart, itsel sae true,
It ne'er mistrusted thine.

Hard is thy heart, Lord Gregory,
And flinty is thy breast:
Thou dart of heaven that flashest by,
O, will thou give me rest!

Ye mustering thunders from above
Your willing victim see!
But spare, and pardon my fause love,
His wrangs to heaven and me!

OPEN THE DOOR TO ME, OH!

WITH ALTERATIONS.

Oh, open the door, some pity to shew,
Oh, open the door to me, oh!
Tho' thou hast been false, I'll ever prove true
Oh, open the door to me, oh!

Cauld is the blast upon my pale cheek,
But caulder thy love for me, oh!
The frost, that freezes the life at my heart,
Is nought to my pains fra thee, oh!

The wan moon is setting behind the white wave
And time is setting with me, oh!
False friends, false love, farewell! for mair
I'll ne'er trouble them, nor thee, oh!

She has open'd the door, she has open'd it wide;
She sees his pale corse on the plain, oh!
My true love! she cried, and sank down by his side,
Never to rise again, oh!

JESSIE.

Tune—"Bonnie Dundee."

TRUE hearted was he, the sad swain o' the Yarrow,
And fair are the maids on the banks o' the Ayr,
But by the sweet side o' the Nith's winding river,
Are lovers as faithful, and maidens as fair:
To equal young Jessie seek Scotland all over;
To equal young Jessie you seek it in vain;
Grace, beauty, and elegance fetter her lover,
And maidenly modesty fixes the chain.

O, fresh is the rose in the gay, dewy morning,
And sweet is the lily at evening close;
But in the fair presence o' lovely young Jessie,
Unseen is the lily, unheeded the rose.
Love sits in her smile, a wizard ensnaring;
Enthron'd in her een he delivers his la',
And still to her charms she alone is a stranger,—
Her modest demeanour's the jewel of a'.

WANDERING WILLIE.

HERE awa, there awa, wandering Willie:
Now tired with wandering, haud awa hame;
Come to my bosom, my ain only dearie,
Tell me thou bring'st me my Willie the same.

Winter winds blew loud and cauld at our parting,
Fears for my Willie brought the tear in my e'e;
Now welcome the simmer, and welcome my Willie,
The simmer to nature, my Willie to me!

Rest, ye wild storms, in the cave o' your slumbers;
How your dread howling a lover alarms!
Wauken, ye breezes, row gently, ye billows,
And waft my dear laddie ance mair to my arms.

But oh, if he's faithless, and minds na his Nannie,
O still flow between us, thou wide roaring main;
May I never see it, may I never trow it,
But, dying, believe that my Willie's my ain.

LOGAN BRAES.

Tune—"Logan Waters."

O LOGAN, sweetly didst thou glide
That day I was my Willie's bride;
And years sinsyne hae o'er us run,
Like Logan to the simmer sun;
But now thy flow'ry banks appear
Like drumlie winter, dark and drear,
While my dear lad maun face his faes,
Far, far frae me and Logan Braes.

Again the merry month o' May
Has made our hills and valleys gay;
The birds rejoice in leafy bowers,
The bees hum round the breathing flowers;
Blithe morning lifts his rosy eye,
And evening's tears are tears of joy:
My soul, delightless, a' surveys,
While Willie's far frae Logan braes.

Within yon milk-white hawthorn bush,
Amang her nestlings, sits the thrush:
Her faithfu' mate will share her toil,
Or wi' his song her cares beguile:
But I wi' my sweet nurslings here,
Nae mate to help, nae mate to cheer,
Pass widow'd nights and joyless days,
While Willie's far frae Logan Braes.

O wae upon you, men o' state,
That brethren rouse to deadly hate!
As ye mak monie a fond heart mourn,
Sae may it on your heads return!
How can your flinty hearts enjoy
The widow's tears, the orphan's cry?
But soon may peace bring happy days,
And Willie hame to Logan Braes!

THERE WAS A LASS.[1]

Tune—"Bonnie Jean."

THERE was a lass, and she was fair
At kirk and market to be seen;
When a' the fairest maids were met,
The fairest maid was bonnie Jean.

And aye she wrought her mammie's wark,
And aye she sang sae merrily;
The blithest bird upon the bush
Had ne'er a lighter heart than she.

But hawks will rob the tender joys
That bless the little lintwhite's nest;
And frost will blight the fairest flowers;
And love will break the soundest rest.

Young Robie was the brawest lad,
The flower and pride of a' the glen;
And he had owsen, sheep, and kye,
And wanton naigies nine or ten.

[1] Miss Jean M'Murdo, of Drumlanrig.

He gaed wi Jeanie to the tryste,
He danc'd wi' Jeanie on the down;
And lang ere witless Jeanie wist,
Her heart was tent, her peace was stown.

As in the bosom o' the stream
The moon-beam dwells at dewy e'en;
So trembling, pure, was tender love
Within the breast o' bonnie Jean.

And now she works her mammie's wark,
And aye she sighs wi care and pain;
Yet wistna what her ail might be,
Or what wad make her weel again.

But didna Jeanie's heart loup light,
And didna joy blink in her e'e,
As Robie tauld a tale o' love,
Ae e'enin on the lily lea?

The sun was sinking in the west,
The birds sang sweet in ilka grove:
His cheek to hers he fondly prest,
And whispered thus his tale o' love:

"O Jennie fair, I lo'e thee dear;
O canst thou think to fancy me?
Or wilt thou leave thy mammie's cot,
And learn to tent the farms wi' me?

"At barn or byre thou shaltna drudge,
Or naething else to trouble thee;
But stray amang the heather-bells,
And tent the waving corn wi' me."

Now what could artless Jeanie do?
She had nae will to say him na:
At length she blush'd a sweet consent,
And love was aye between them twa

PHILLIS THE FAIR.[1]

Tune—"Robin Adair."

WHILE larks with little wing
Fann'd the pure air,
Tasting and breathing spring,
Forth I did fare:
Gay the sun's golden eye
Peep'd o'er the mountains high;
Such thy morn! did I cry,
Phillis the fair.

In each bird's careless song
Glad did I share;
While yon wild flowers among,
Chance led me there:
Sweet to the opening day,
Rosebuds bent the dewy spray;
Such thy bloom! did I say,
Phillis the fair.

Down in a shady walk,
Doves cooing were,
I mark'd the cruel hawk
Caught in a snare:
So kind may fortune be,
Such make his destiny,
He who would injure thee,
Phillis the fair.

[1] Said to be the sister of Jean M'Murdo.

BY ALLAN STREAM.

Tune—"Allan Water."

By Allan stream I chanc'd to rove,
While Phœbus sank beyond Benleddi;[1]
The winds were whispering thro' the grove,
The yellow corn was waving ready:
I listen'd to a lover's sang,
And thought on youthfu' pleasures manie!
And aye the wild-wood echoes rang—
O dearly do I love thee, Annie![2]

O, happy be the woodbine bower,
Nae nightly bogle mak it eerie;
Nor ever sorrow stain the hour,
The place and time I met my dearie!
Her head upon my throbbing breast,
She, sinking, said "I'm thine for ever!"
While monie a kiss the seal imprest,
The sacred vow, we ne'er should sever.

The haunt o' spring's the primrose brae;
The simmer joys the flocks to follow;
How cheery, thro' her shortening day,
Is autumn, in her weeds o' yellow!
But can they melt the glowing heart,
Or chain the soul in speechless pleasure,
Or thro' each nerve the rapture dart,
Like meeting her, our bosom's treasure?

HAD I A CAVE.

Tune—"Robin Adair."

Had I a cave on some wild, distant shore,
Where the winds howl to the waves' dashing roar;
There would I weep my woes,
There seek my lost repose,
Till grief my eyes should close,
Ne'er to wake more.

[1] A mountain west of Strathallan, 3,000 feet high.—R.B.
[2] Or, "O my love Annie's very bonnie."

Falsest of womankind, canst thou declare
All thy fond plighted vows— fleeting as air?
To thy new lover hie,
Laugh o'er thy perjury,
Then in thy bosom try,
What peace is there!

WHISTLE, AND I'LL COME TO YOU, MY LAD.

O WHISTLE, and I'll come to you, my lad;
O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad:
Tho' father and mither and a' should go mad,
O whistle and I'll come to you, my lad.

But warily tent, when ye come to court me,
And come na unless the back-yett be a-jee;
Syne up the back-stile, and let naebody see,
And come as ye werena comin to me.
And come, &c.

At Kirk, or at market, whene'er ye meet me,
Gang by me as tho' that ye car'dna a flie:
But steal me a blink o' your bonnie black e'e
Yet look as ye werena looking at me.
Yet look, &c.
O whistle, &c.

Aye vow and protest that ye carena for me,
And whiles ye may lightly my beauty a wee;
But courtna anither, tho' jokin ye be,
For fear that she wyle your fancy frae me,
For fear, &c.

O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad;
O whistle, and I'll come to you my lad:
Tho' father and mither and a' should gae mad,
O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad.

HERE IS THE GLEN.[1]

Tune—"Banks of Cree."

HERE is the glen, and here the bower,
All underneath the birchen shade;
The village-bell has toll'd the hour,
O what can stay my lovely maid?

'Tis not Maria's whispering call;
'Tis but the balmy-breathing gale
Mixt with some warbler's dying fall,
The dewy star of eve to hail.

It is Maria's voice I hear!
So calls the woodlark in the grove
His little faithful mate to cheer—
At once 'tis music—and 'tis love.

And art thou come? and art thou true?
O welcome, dear to love and me!
And let us all our vows renew,
Along the flow'ry banks of Cree.

ON THE SEAS AND FAR AWAY.[2]

Tune—"O'er the hills and far away."

How can my poor heart be glad,
When absent from my Sailor lad?
How can I the thought forego,
He's on the seas to meet the foe?
Let me wander, let me rove,
Still my heart is with my love;
Nightly dreams and thoughts by day
Are with him that's far away.

[1] I got an air, pretty enough, composed by Lady Elizabeth Heron, of Heron, which she calls "The Banks of the Cree." Cree is a beautiful romantic stream; and as her ladyship is a particular friend of mine, I have written this song to it.—R. B.

[2] Burns was at first pleased with these verses, but he afterwards thought them unequal and "flimsy."

On the seas and far away,
On stormy seas and far away;
Nightly dreams and thoughts by day
Are aye with him that's far away.

When in summer's noon I faint,
As weary flocks around me pant,
Haply in this scorching sun
My Sailor's thund'ring at his gun:
Bullets spare my only joy!
Bullets spare my darling boy!
Fate do with me what you may,
Spare but him that's far away!

At the starless midnight hour,
When winter rules with boundless power;
As the storms the forest tear,
And thunders rend the howling air,
Listening to the doubling roar,
Surging on the rocky shore,—
All I can—I weep and pray,
For his weel that's far away.

Peace, thy olive wand extend,
And bid wild War his ravage end,
Man with brother man to meet,
And as a brother kindly greet:
Then may Heaven with prosp'rous gales
Fill my Sailor's welcome sails,
To my arms their charge convey,
My dear lad that's far away.

On the seas and far away,
On stormy seas and far away;
Nightly dreams and thoughts by day
Are aye with him that's far away.

HARK THE MAVIS,[1]

Tune—"Ca' the yowes to the knowes."

CHORUS.

Ca' the yowes to the knowes.
Ca' them where the heather grows,
Ca' them where the burnie rows,[2]
My bonnie dearie.

Hark! the mavis' evening sang
Sounding Clouden's woods amang!
Then a faulding let us gang,
My bonnie dearie.
Ca' the, &c.

We'll gae down by Clouden side,
Thro' the hazèls spreading wide,
O'er the waves that sweetly glide,
To the moon sae clearly.
Ca' the, &c.

Yonder Clouden's silent towers,
Where at moonshine midnight hours,
O'er the dewy-bending flowers,
Fairies dance sae cheery.
Ca' the, &c.

Ghaist nor bogle shalt thou fear;
Thou'rt to love and Heaven sae dear,
Nocht of ill may come thee near,
My bonnie dearie.
Ca' the, &c.

Fair and lovely as thou art,
Thou hast stown[3] my very heart;
I can die—but canna part,
My bonnie dearie.

Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
Ca' them where the heather grows,
Ca' them where the burnie rows,
My bonnie dearie.

[1] Thrush. [2] Rolls. [3] Stolen.

SHE SAYS SHE LO'ES ME BEST OF A'.[1]

Tune—"Onagh's Waterfall."

SAE flaxen were her ringlets,
Her eyebrows of a darker hue,
Bewitchingly o'erarching
Twa laughing een o' bonnie blue.
Her smiling, sae wyling,
Wad make a wretch forget his woe;
What pleasure, what treasure,
Unto these rosy lips to grow!
Such was my Chloris' bonnie face,
When first her bonnie face I saw,
And aye my Chloris' dearest charm,
She says she lo'es me best of a'.

Like harmony her motion;
Her pretty ancle is a spy
Betraying fair proportion,
Wad make a saint forget the sky;
Sae warming, sae charming,
Her faultless form and gracefu' air;
Ilk feature—auld Nature
Declar'd that she could do nae mair:
Hers are the willing chains o' love,
By conquering Beauty's sovereign law;
And aye my Chloris' dearest charm,
She says she lo'es me best of a'.

Let others love the city,
And gaudy show at sunny noon
Gie me the lonely valley,
The dewy eve, and rising moon
Fair beaming and streaming,
Her silver light the boughs amang;
While falling, recalling,
The amorous thrush concludes his sang:
There dearest Chloris, wilt thou rove
By wimpling burn and leafy shaw,
And hear my vows o' truth and love,
And say thou lo'est me best of a'?

[1] The lady in whose honour Burns composed this song was Miss Lorimer, of Craigieburn, afterwards Mrs. Whelpdale.

THE LOVER'S MORNING SALUTE TO HIS MISTRESS.[1]

Tune—"Deil tak the Wars."

SLEEP'ST thou, or wak'st thou, fairest creature?
Rosy morn now lifts his eye,
Numbering ilka bud which Nature
Waters wi the tears o' joy:
Now thro' the leafy woods,
And by the reeking floods,
Wild Nature's tenants freely, gladly stray;
The lintwhite in his bower
Chants o'er the breathing flower;
The lav'rock to the sky
Ascends wi' sangs o' joy,
While the sun and thou arise to bless the day.

Phœbus, gilding the brow o' morning,
Banishes ilk darksome shade,
Nature gladdening and adorning;
Such to me my lovely maid.
When absent frae my fair,
The murky shades o' care
With starless gloom o'ercast my sullen sky:
But when in beauty's light,
She meets my ravish'd sight,
When thro' my very heart
Her beaming glories dart;
'Tis then I wake to life, to light, and joy.

[1] Miss Lorimer.

LASSIE WI' THE LINT-WHITE LOCKS.

Tune—"Rothiemurchie's Rant."

CHORUS.

LASSIE wi' the lint-white locks,
Bonnie lassie, artless lassie,
Wilt thou wi' me tent the flocks?
Wilt thou be my dearie, O?

Now nature cleeds the flowery lea,
And a' is young and sweet like thee;
O wilt thou share its joys wi' me,
And say thou'lt be my dearie, O?
Lassie wi', &c.

And when the welcome simmer-shower
Has cheer'd ilk drooping little flower,
We'll to the breathing woodbine bower
At sultry noon, my dearie, O.
Lassie wi', &c.

When Cynthia lights, wi' silver ray,
The weary shearer's hameward way,
Thro' yellow waving fields we'll stray
And talk o' love, my dearie, O.
Lassie wi' &c.

And when the howling wintry blast
Disturbs my lassie's midnight rest;
Enclasped to my faithfu' breast,
I'll comfort thee, my dearie, O.
Lassie wi' the lint-white locks,
Bonnie lassie, artless lassie,
Wilt thou wi' me tent the flocks?
Wilt thou be my dearie, O?

THE AULD MAN.[1]

Tune—"Gil Morice."

BUT lately seen in gladsome green,
The woods rejoic'd the day
Thro' gentle showers the laughing flowers
In double pride were gay:
But now our joys are fled,
On winter blasts awa!
Yet maiden May, in rich array,
Again shall bring them a'.

But my white pow, nae kindly thowe[2]
Shall melt the snaws of age;
My trunk of eild, but buss or bield,[3]
Sinks in time's wintry rage.
Oh, age has weary days,
And nights o' sleepless pain!
Thou golden time o' youthfu' prime,
Why com'st thou not again?

FAREWELL, THOU STREAM.

Tune—"Nancy's to the Greenwood gane."

FAREWELL, thou stream that winding flows
Around Eliza's dwelling.
O Mem'ry! spare the cruel throes
Within my bosom swelling:
Condemn'd to drag a hopeless chain,
And yet in secret languish,
To feel a fire in ev'ry vein,
Nor dare disclose my anguish.

[1] This piece has at least the merit of being a regular pastoral: the vernal moon, the summer noon, the autumnal evening, and the winter night, are regularly rounded.- R.B.

[2] Thaw. [3] Without shelter.

Love's veriest wretch, unseen, unknown,
I fain my griefs would cover:
The bursting sigh, th' unweeting groan,
Betray the hapless lover.
I know thou doom'st me to despair
Nor wilt, nor canst relieve me;
But oh, Eliza, hear one prayer,—
For pity's sake forgive me!

The music of thy voice I heard,
Nor wist while it enslav'd me;
I saw thine eyes, yet nothing fear'd,
Till fears no more had sav'd me:
Th' unwary sailor thus aghast,
The wheeling torrent viewing,
'Mid circling horrors sinks at last
In overwhelming ruin.

MA NANNIE'S AWA.

Tune—"There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame."

Now in her green mantle blythe Nature arrays,
And listens the lambkins that bleat o'er the braes,
While birds warble welcome in ilka green shaw;
But to me its delightless—my Nannie's awa.

The snaw-drap and primrose our woodlands adorn,
And violets bathe in the weet o' the morn:
They pain my sad bosom, sae sweetly they blaw,
They mind me o' Nannie—my Nannie's awa.

Thou lav'rock that springs frae the dews o' the lawn,
The shepherd to warn o' the grey-breaking dawn,
And thou mellow mavis that hails the night-fa',
Gie over for pity—my Nannie's awa.

Come Autumn sae pensive, in yellow and gray,
And soothe me wi' tidings o' nature's decay;
The dark, dreary Winter, and wild-driving snaw,
Alane can delight me—now Nannie's awa.

SWEET FA'S THE EVE.[1]

Tune—"Craigieburn-wood."

SWEET fa's the eve on Craigie-burn,
And blythe awakes the morrow,
But a' the pride o' spring's return
Can yield me nocht but sorrow.

I see the flowers and spreading trees,
I hear the wild birds singing;
But what a weary wight can please,
And care his bosom wringing?

Fain, fain would I my griefs impart,
Yet dare na for your anger;
But secret love will break my heart,
If I conceal it langer.

If thou refuse to pity me,
If thou shalt love anither,
When yon green leaves fa' frae the tree,
Around my grave they'll wither.

[1] Addressed to Miss Lorimer. Craigieburn-wood is on the banks of the river Moffat. The woods of Craigieburn and of Duncrief were, at one time, favourite haunts of our poet. (Currie.)

SONG.

Tune—"Humours of Glen."

THEIR groves o' sweet myrtles let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright-beaming summers exalt their perfume;
Far dearer to me yon lone glen o' green breckan,[1]
Wi' the burn stealing under the lang yellow broom.

Far dearer to me are yon humble broom bowers,
Where the blue-bell and gowan[2] lurk lowly, unseen:
For there, lightly tripping amang the wild flowers,
A listening the linnet, aft wanders my Jean.

Tho' rich is the breeze in their gay sunny valleys,
And cauld Caledonia's blast on the wave;
Their sweet-scented woodlands that skirt the proud palace
What are they? The haunt of the tyrant and slave!

The slave's spicy forests, and gold-bubbling fountains,
The brave Caledonian views wi' disdain;
He wanders as free as the winds of his mountains,
Save love's willing fetters, the chains o' his Jean.

ADDRESS TO THE WOODLARK.

Tune—"Where'll bonnie Ann lie."

O STAY, sweet warbling wood-lark, stay,
Nor quit for me the trembling spray;
A hapless lover courts thy lay,
Thy soothing fond complaining.

Again, again that tender part,
That I may catch thy melting art;
For surely that wad touch her heart,
Wha kills me wi' disdaining.

[1] Fern. [2] Daisy.

Say, was thy little mate unkind,
And heard thee as the careless wind?
Oh, nocht but love and sorrow join'd
Sic notes o' wae could wauken.

Thou tells o' never-ending care;
O' speechless grief, and dark despair;
For pity's sake, sweet bird, nae mair!
Or my poor heart is broken!

HOW CRUEL ARE THE PARENTS.

Tune—"John Anderson my Jo."

How cruel are the parents
Who riches only prize,
And to the wealthy booby
Poor woman sacrifice.
Meanwhile the hapless daughter
Has but a choice of strife;
To shun a tyrant father's hate,
Becomes a wretched wife.

The ravening hawk pursuing,
The trembling dove thus flies,
To shun impelling ruin
Awhile her pinions tries;
Till of escape despairing,
No shelter or retreat,
She trusts the ruthless falconer,
And drops beneath his feet.

MARK YONDER POMP.

Tune—"Deil tak the wars."

MARK yonder pomp of costly fashion,
Round the wealthy, titled bride;
But when compar'd with real passion,
Poor is all that princely pride.
What are the showy treasures?
What are the noisy pleasures?
The gay, gaudy glare of vanity and art:
The polish'd jewel's blaze
May draw the wond'ring gaze,
And courtly grandeur bright,
The fancy may delight,
But never, never can come near the heart.

But did you see my dearest Chloris,
In simplicity's array;
Lovely as yonder sweet opening flower is,
Shrinking from the gaze of day!
O then, the heart alarming,
And all resistless charming,
In Love's delightful fetters she chains the willing soul!
Ambition would disown
The world's imperial crown;
Even Avarice would deny
His worshipp'd deity,
And feel thro' every vein Love's raptures roll.

THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY.[1]

BONNIE lassie, will ye go,
Bonnie lassie will ye go,
To the Birks of Aberfeldy.

Now simmer blinks on flowery braes,
And o'er the crystal streamlet plays,
Come, let us spend the lightsome days
In the Birks of Aberfeldy.

[1] Near Moness, in Perthshire. The birch-trees were there very abundant, but have been replaced by trees of larger growth.

While o'er their heads the hazels hing,
The little birdies blithely sing,
Or lightly flit on wanton wing
In the Birks of Aberfeldy.

The braes ascend like lofty wa's,
The foaming stream deep roaring fa's
O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading shaws,
The Birks of Aberfeldy.

The hoary cliffs are crown'd wi' flowers,
White o'er the linns the burnie pours,
And, rising weets wi' misty showers
The Birks of Aberfeldy.

Let fortune's gifts at random flee,
They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me,
Supremely blest wi' love and thee.
In the Birks of Aberfeldy.

Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
Bonnie lassie will ye go,
To the Birks of Aberfeldy?

TO MARY.[1]

Tune—"Ewe-Bughts, Marion."

WILL ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
And leave auld Scotia's shore?
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
Across the Atlantic's roar?

O sweet grows the lime and the orange,
And the apple on the pine:
But a' the charms of the Indies
Can never equal thine.

I hae swore by the heavens to my Mary,
I hae sworn by the heavens to be true;
And sae may the heavens forget me,
When I forget my vow!

O plight me your faith, my Mary,
And plight me your lily-white hand;
O plight me your faith, my Mary,
Before I leave Scotia's strand.

We hae plighted our troth, my Mary,
In mutual affection to join,
And curst be the cause that shall part us!
The hour and the moment o' time.

[1] Mary Campbell. In my very early years, when I was thinking of going to the West Indies, I took the this farewell of a dear girl.—R.B.

STRATHALLAN'S LAMENT.[1]

THICKEST night, o'erhang my dwelling!
Howling tempests o'er me rave!
Turbid torrents, wintry swelling,
Still surround my lonely cave!

Crystal streamlets gently flowing,
Busy haunts of base mankind,
Western breezes softly blowing,
Suit not my distracted mind.

In the cause of right engaged,
Wrongs injurious to redress,
Honour's war we strongly wag'd
But the Heavens denied success.

Ruin's wheel has driven o'er us,
Not a hope that dare attend;
The wide world is all before us—
But a world without a friend!

[2] Lord Strathallan, bewailing his forlorn state after the defeat of Culloden.

RAVING WINDS AROUND HER BLOWING.[1]

Tune—"M'Gregor of Ruara's lament.'

RAVING winds around her blowing,
Yellow leaves the woodlands strowing,
By a river hoarsely roaring,
Isabella strayed deploring:
"Farewell, hours that late did measure
Sunshine days of joy and pleasure;
Hail, thou gloomy night of sorrow,
Cheerless night that knows no morrow!

"O'er the past too fondly wandering,
On the hopeless future pondering;
Chilly grief my life-blood freezes,
Fell despair my fancy seizes.
Life, thou soul of every blessing,
Load to misery most distressing.
O, how gladly I'd resign thee,
And to dark oblivion join thee!"

MUSING ON THE ROARING OCEAN.

Tune—"Druimion Dubh."

MUSING on the roaring ocean
Which divides my love and me;
Wearying Heaven in warm devotion,
For his weal where'er he be.

Hope and fear's alternate billow
Yielding late to nature's law,
Whispering spirits round my pillow
Talk of him that's far awa.

Ye whom sorrow never wounded,
Ye who never shed a tear,
Care untroubl'd, joy surrounded,
Gaudy day to you is dear.

[1] Miss Isabella M'Leod, who had lost a sister and a brother-in-law.

Gentle night, do thou befriend me ;
Downy sleep the curtain draw ;
Spirits kind, again attend me,
Talk of him that's far awa !

BLITHE WAS SHE.

Tune—"Andrew and his cutty gun."

CHORUS.

Blithe, blithe and merry was she,
Blithe was she but and ben :
Blithe by the banks of Ern,
And blithe in Glenturit glen.

By Ochtertyre grows the aik,
On Yarrow banks the birken shaw;
But Phemie[1] was a bonnier lass
Than braes o' Yarrow ever saw.
Blithe, &c,

Her looks were like a flower in May,
Her smile was like a simmer morn;
She tripped by the banks of Ern,
As light's a bird upon a thorn.
Blithe, &c.

Her bonnie face it was as meek
As onie lamb's upon a lea ;
The evening sun was ne'er sae sweet
As was the blink o' Phemie's e'e,
Blithe, &c.

The Highland Hills I've wander'd wide,
And o'er the Lowlands I hae been;
But Phemie was the blithest lass
That ever trod the dewy green.
Blithe, &c.

[1] Miss Euphemia Murray.

THE LAZY MIST.

Irish Air—"Coolun."

THE lazy mist hangs from the brow of the hill,
Concealing the course of the dark-winding rill;
How languid the scenes, late so sprightly appear,
As Autumn to Winter resigns the pale year!
The forests are leafless, the meadows are brown,
And all the gay foppery of summer is flown:
Apart let me wander, apart let me muse,
How quick time is flying, how keen Fate pursues;

How long I have lived, but how much lived in vain:
How little of life's scanty span may remain:
What aspects, old Time, in his progress, has worn;
What ties, cruel Fate in my bosom has torn.
How foolish, or worse, till our summit is gain'd!
And downward, how weaken'd, how darken'd, how pain'd!
This life's not worth having with all it can give,
For something beyond it poor man sure must live.

A ROSE-BUD BY MY EARLY WALK.

Tune—"The shepherd's wife."

A ROSE-BUD by my early walk,
Adown a corn-enclosed bawk,[1]
Sae gently bent its thorny stalk,
All on a dewy morning.

Ere twice the shades o' dawn are fled
In a' its crimson glory spread,
And drooping rich the dewy head.
It scents the early morning.

[1] Bank.

Within the bush her covert nest
A little linnet fondly prest,
The dew sat chilly on her breast
Sae early in the morning.

She soon shall see her tender brood,
The pride the pleasure o' the wood,
Amang the fresh green leaves bedew'd,
Awake the early morning.

So thou, dear bird, young Jeany[1] fair,
On trembling string, or vocal air,
Shall sweetly pay the tender care
That tents thy early morning.

So thou, sweet rose-bud, young and gay
Shalt beauteous blaze upon the day,
And bless the parent's evening ray
That watched thy early morning.

THE BLISSFUL DAY.[2]

Tune—"Seventh of November.

THE day returns, my bosom burns,
The blissful day we twa did meet,
Tho' winter wild in tempest toil'd,
Ne'er summer-sun was half sae sweet.
Then a' the pride that loads the tide,
And crosses o'er the sultry line;
Than kingly robes, than crowns and globes;—
Heaven gave me more, it made thee mine.

[1] Miss Jeany Cruikshanks.

[2] Composed for the anniversary of the wedding-day of Mr. and Mrs. Riddel.

While day and night can bring delight,
Or nature aught of pleasure give;
While joys above my mind can move,—
For thee and thee alone, I live!
When that grim foe of life below
Comes in between to make us part:
The iron hand that breaks our band,
It breaks my bliss—it breaks my heart.

THE BRAES O' BALLOCHMYLE.

Tune—"Miss Forbes's farewell to Banff.

THE Catrine woods were yellow seen,
The flowers decay'd on Catrine lea,
Nae lav'rock sang on hillock green,
But nature sicken'd on the e'e.
Thro' faded groves Maria sang,
Hersel in beauty's bloom the whyle,
And aye the wild-wood echoes rang,
Fareweel the braes o' Ballochmyle.

Low in your wintry beds, ye flowers,
Again ye'll flourish fresh and fair;
Ye birdies dumb, in with'ring bowers,
Again ye'll charm the vocal air.
But here, alas! for me nae mair
Shall birdie charm, or flow'ret smile;
Fareweel the bonnie banks of Ayr,
Fareweel, fareweel! sweet Ballochmyle

JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO.

JOHN ANDERSON, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonny brow was brent;[1]
But now your brow is bald, John,
Your locks are like the snaw;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither;
And monie a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

TAM GLEN.

Tune—"The Mucking O' Geordie's Byre."

MY heart is a breaking, dear Tittie,
Some counsel een to me come len',
To anger them a' is a pity;
But what will I do wi' Tam Glen?

I'm thinking wi' sic a braw fallow,
In poortith[2] I might mak a fen';[3]
What care I in riches to wallow,
If I maunna marry Tam Glen?

There's Lowrie the laird o' Dumeller,
"Guid-day to you, brute!" he comes ben:
He brags and he blaws o' his siller;
But when will he dance like Tam Glen?

[1] Smooth. [2] Poverty. [3] Manage to live.

My minnie does constantly deave[1] me
And bids me beware o' young men;
They flatter, she says, to deceive me
But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen?

My daddie says, gin I'll forsake him,
He'll gie me guid hunder marks ten:
But, if it's ordain'd I maun take him,
O wha will I get but Tam Glen?

Yestreen at the Valentines' dealing,
My heart to my mou gied a sten:[2]
For thrice I drew ane without failing,
And thrice it was written, Tam Glen.

The last Halloween I was waukin[3]
My droukit[4] sark-sleeve, as ye ken;
His likeness cam up the house staukin—
And the very grey breeks o' Tam Glen!

Come counsel, dear Tittie, don't tarry;
I'll gie you my bonnie black hen,
Gif you will advise me to marry
The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen.

THE BANKS OF NITH.

Tune—"Robie Donna Gorach."

THE Thames flows proudly to the sea,
Where royal cities stately stand;
But sweeter flows the Nith to me,
Where Cummins ance had high command:
When shall I see that honour'd land,
That winding stream I loved so dear
Must wayward fortune's adverse hand
For ever, ever keep me here?

[1] Vex. [2] Leap. [3] Watching. [4] Wet.

How lovely, Nith, thy fruitful vales,
Where spreading hawthorns gaily bloom;
How sweetly wind thy sloping dales,
Where lambkins wanton thro' the broom!
Tho' wandering, now, must be my doom,
Far from thy bonnie banks and braes,
May there my latest hour consume,
Amang the friends of early days!

BESSY AND HER SPINNING WHEEL.

O LEEZE[1] me on my spinnin wheel,
O leeze me on my rock and reel,
Frae tap to tae that cleeds me bien,[2]
And haps[3] me fiel[4] and warm at e'en!
I'll set me down and sing and spin,
While laigh[5] descends the simmer sun,
Blest wi' content, and milk, and meal—
O leeze me on my spinnin wheel.

On ilka hand the burnies trot,
And meet below my theekit[6] cot;
The scented birk and hawthorn white
Across the pool their arms unite,
Alike to screen the birdie's nest,
And little fishes caller[7] rest:
The sun blinks kindly in the biel',[8]
Where blithe I turn my spinnin wheel.

On lofty aiks[9] the cushats wail,[10]
And echo cons the doolfu' tale;
The lintwhites in the hazel braes,
Delighted, rival ithers' lays:

[1] "I am proud of thee." [2] That clothes me well.
[3] Wraps. [4] Soft. [5] Low. [6] Thatched.
[7] Cool. [8] Nook. [9] Oaks. [10] Wood-pigeons.

The craik[1] amang the claver hay,
The paitrick[2] whirrin o'er the ley,
The swallow jinkin[3] round my shiel,[4]
Amuse me at my spinnin wheel.

Wi' sma' to sell, and less to buy,
Aboon distress, below envy,
O wha wad leave this humble state,
For a' the pride of a' the great?
Amid their flarin, idle toys,
Amid their cumbrous, dinsome joys,
Can they the peace and pleasure feel
Of Bessy at her spinnin wheel?

COUNTRY LASSIE.

Tune—"John come kiss me now."

In simmer, when the hay was mawn,
And corn wav'd green in ilka field,
While claver blooms white o'er the lea,
And roses blaw in ilka bield;[5]
Blithe Bessie in the milking shiel,
Says, "I'll be wed, come o't what will;"
Out spak a dame in wrinkled eild,—
"O' guid advisement comes nae ill:

"It's ye hae wooers monie ane,
And, lassie, ye're but young, ye ken;
Then wait a wee, and cannie wale[6]
A routhie but, a routhie ben:[7]
There's Johnie o' the Buskie-glen,
Fu' is his barn, fu' is his byre;[8]
Tak this frae me, my bonnie hen,
It's plenty beets[9] the luver's fire,"

[1] The corn-rail. [2] Partridge. [3] Dodging. [4] Shed.
[5] Sunny nook of a wood. [6] Choose.
[7] A plentiful kitchen and parlour. [8] Cattle-shed. [9] Feeds.

"For Johnie o' the Buskie-glen
I dinna care a single flie;
He lo'es sae weel his craps and kye,[1]
He has nae luve to spare for me;
But blithe's the blink o' Robie's e'e,
And weel I wat he lo'es me dear:
Ae blink o' him I wad na gie
For Buskie-glen and a' his gear."

"O thoughtless lassie, life's a faught;[2]
The canniest gate, the strife is sair;
But aye fu' han't is fechtin[3] best,
An hungry care's an unco care:
But some will spend, and some will spare,
An' wilfu' folk maun hae their will;
Syne as ye brew, my maiden fair,
Keep mind that ye maun drink the yill."[4]

"O, gear will buy me rigs o' land,
And gear will buy me sheep and kye;
But the tender heart o' leesome[5] luve
The gowd and siller canna buy:
We may be poor—Robie and I,—
Light is the burden luve lays on;
Content and luve bring peace and joy,
What mair hae queens upon a throne?"

THE BANKS O' DOON.

Tune—"The Caledonian Hunt's Delight."

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair!
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
An' I sae weary fu' o' care!

[1] Crops and cows. [2] Fight. [3] Fighting. [4] Ale. [5] Gladsome.

Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons thro' the flowering thorn:
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed—never to return.

Thou'lt break my heart, thou bonnie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.
Aft hae I rov'd by bonnie Doon
To see the rose and woodbine twine:
And ilka bird sang o' its luve,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree;
And my fause lover stole my rose,
But ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

BEHOLD THE HOUR.

Tune—"Oran-Gaoil."

BEHOLD the hour, the boat arrive!
Thou go'st, thou darling of my heart:
Sever'd from thee can I survive?
But fate has will'd and we must part!
I'll often greet this surging swell;
Yon distant isle will often hail:
"E'en here I took the last farewell;
There latest mark'd her vanish'd sail."
Along the solitary shore,
While flitting sea-fowls round me cry,
Across the rolling, dashing roar,
I'll westward turn my wistful eye:
"Happy, thou Indian grove," I'll say,
"Where now my Nancy's path may be!
While thro' thy sweets she loves to stray,
O, tell me, does she muse on me?

AFTON WATER.[1]

FLOW gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Thou stock-dove whose echo resounds thro' the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
Thou green-crested lapwing, thy screaming forbear,
I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighbouring hills,
Far mark'd with the courses of clear, winding rills;
There daily I wander as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow;
There oft as mild ev'ning weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides;
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As gathering sweet flow'rets she stems thy clear wave.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

THE POSIE.

O LUVE will venture in, where it daur na weel be seen,
O luve will venture in, where wisdom ance has been
But I will down yon river rove, amang the wood green,—
And a' to pu' a Posie to my ain dear May.

[1] Afton, a stream in Ayrshire.

The primrose I will pu', the firstling o' the year,
And I will pu' the pink, the emblem o' my dear,
For she's the pink o' womankind, and blooms without a peer;—
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May

I'll pu' the budding rose, when Phœbus peeps in view,
For it's like a baumy kiss o' her sweet bonnie mou;
The hyacinth's for constancy, wi' its unchanging blue,
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

The lily it is pure, and the lily it is fair,
And in her lovely bosom I'll place the lily there;
The daisy's for simplicity and unaffected air,
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

The hawthorn I will pu', wi' its locks o' siller gray,
Where, like an aged man, it stands at break o' day,
But the songster's nest within the bush I winna tak away;—
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

The woodbine I will pu' when the e'ening star is near,
And the diamond drops o' dew shall be her een sae clear:
The violet's for modesty which weel she fa's to wear,—
And a' to be a Posie to my ain dear May.

I'll tie the posie round wi' the silken band o' luve,
And I'll place it in her breast, and I'll swear by a' above,
That to my latest draught o' life, the band shall ne'er remuve,—
And this will be a Posie to my ain dear May.

STREAMS THAT GLIDE.[1]

Tune—"Morag."

STREAMS that glide in orient plains,
Never bound by winter's chains!
Glowing here on golden sands,
There commix'd with foulest stains
From tyranny's empurpled bands:

[1] Written after a visit to Gordon Castle, 1787.

These, their richly-gleaming waves,
I leave to tyrants and their slaves:
Give me the stream that sweetly laves
The banks by Castle Gordon.

Spicy forests, ever gay,
Shading from the burning ray
Hapless wretches sold to toil,
Or the ruthless native's way,
Bent on slaughter, blood, and spoil:
Woods that ever verdant wave,
I leave the tyrant and the slave;
Give me the groves that lofty brave
The storms by Castle Gordon.

Wildly here without control,
Nature reigns and rules the whole;
In that sober pensive mood,
Dearest to the feeling soul,
She plants the forest, pours the flood;
Life's poor day I'll musing rave,
And find at night a sheltering cave,
Where waters flow and wild woods wave,
By bonnie Castle Gordon.

FAREWELL TO ELIZA.

Tune—"Gilderoy."

FROM thee, Eliza, I must go,
And from my native shore;
The cruel fates between us throw
A boundless ocean's roar;
But boundless oceans, roaring wide,
Between my Love and me,
They never, never can divide
My heart and soul from thee.

Farewell, farewell, Eliza dear,
The maid that I adore!
A boding voice is in mine ear,
We part to meet no more!

But the last throb that leaves my heart,
While death stands victor by,
That throb, Eliza, is thy part,
And thine that latest sigh!

MY NANNIE, O.

BEHIND yon hills where Lugar flows,
'Mang moors an' mosses many, O,
The wintry sun the day has clos'd
And I'll awa to Nannie, O.

The westlin wind blaws loud an' shrill;
The night's baith mirk and rainy, O!
But I'll get my plaid, an' out I'll steal,
An' owre the hill to Nannie, O.

THOU HAST LEFT ME EVER, JAMIE.

Tune—"Fee him, Father."

THOU hast left me ever, Jamie,
Thou hast left me ever;
Thou hast left me ever, Jamie,
Thou hast left me ever.
Aften hast thou vow'd that death
Only should us sever;
Now thou'st left thy lass for aye—
I maun see thee never, Jamie,
I'll see thee never!

Thou hast me forsaken, Jamie,
Thou hast me forsaken;
Thou hast me forsaken, Jamie,
Thou hast me forsaken.

Thou canst love anither jo,
While my heart is breaking;
Soon my weary een I'll close—
Never mair to waken, Jamie,
Ne'er mair to waken!

MY CHLORIS.

Tune—"My lodging is on the cold ground.'

My Chloris, mark how green the groves,
The primrose banks how fair:
The balmy gales awake the flowers,
And wave thy flaxen hair.

The lav'rock shuns the palace gay,
And o'er the cottage sings:
For nature smiles as sweet, I ween,
To shepherds, as to kings.

Let minstrels sweep the skilfu' string
In lordly lighted ha';
The shepherd stops his simple reed,
Blithe in the birken shaw.

The princely revel may survey
Our rustic dance wi' scorn;
But are their hearts as light as ours
Beneath the milk-white thorn?

The shepherd, in the flowery glen,
In shepherd's phrase will woo:
The courtier tells a finer tale;—
But is his heart as true?

These wild-wood flowers I've pu'd, to deck
That spotless breast of thine:
The courtiers' gems may witness love—
But 'tis na love like mine.

NOW WESTLIN WINDS.

Tune—"I had a Horse, I had nae Mair.

Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns
Bring autumn's pleasant weather;
The moorcock springs, on whirring wings,
Amang the blooming heather:
Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
Delights the weary farmer:
And the moon shines bright, when I rove at night
To muse upon my charmer.

The partridge loves the fruitful fells;
The plover loves the mountains;
The woodcock haunts the lonely dells;
The soaring hern the fountains:
Thro' lofty groves the cushat roves,
The path of man to shun it;
The hazel bush o'erhangs the thrush,
The spreading thorn the linnet.

Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
The savage and the tender;
Some social join, and leagues combine,
Some solitary wander;
Avaunt, away! the cruel sway,
Tyrannic man's dominion;
The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry
The flutt'ring gory pinion!

But, Peggy dear, the ev'ning's clear,
Thick flies the skimming swallow;
The sky is blue, the fields in view,
All fading-green and yellow:
Come, let us stray our gladsome way,
And view the charms of nature:
The rustling corn, the fruited thorn,
And ev'ry happy creature.

We'll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
Till the silent moon shine clearly;
I'll grasp thy waist, and, fondly prest,
Swear how I love thee dearly:
Not vernal show'rs to budding flow'rs,
Not autumn to the farmer,
So dear can be, as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely charmer!

THE AUTHOR'S FAREWELL TO HIS NATIVE COUNTRY.

THE gloomy night is gath'ring fast,
Loud roars the wild inconstant blast,
Yon murky cloud is foul with rain,
I see it driving o'er the plain;
The hunter now has left the moor,
The scatter'd coveys meet secure,
While here I wander, prest with care,
Along the lonely banks of Ayr.

The Autumn mourns her rip'ning corn
By early Winter's ravage torn:
Across her placid, azure sky,
She sees the scowling tempest fly:
Chill runs my blood to hear it rave,
I think upon the stormy wave,
Where many a danger I must dare,
Far from the bonnie banks of Ayr.

'Tis not the surging billow's roar,
'Tis not that fatal, deadly shore;
Tho' death in every shape appear,
The wretched have no more to fear:
But round my heart the ties are bound,
That heart transpierc'd with many a wound
These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
To leave the bonnie banks of Ayr.

Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales,
Her heathy moors and winding vales;
The scenes where wretched fancy roves,
Pursuing past, unhappy loves!
Farewell, my friends! Farewell my foes!
My peace with these, my love with those—
The bursting tears my heart declare;
Farewell, the bonnie banks of Ayr!

AND MAUN I STILL ON MENIE[1] DOAT.

AGAIN rejoicing Nature sees
Her robe assume its vernal hues,
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
All freshly steep'd in morning dews.

CHORUS.[2]

And maun I still on Menie doat,
And bear the scorn that's in her e'e?
For it's jet, jet black, and its like a hawk,
An' it winna let a body be!

In vain to me the cowslips blaw,
In vain to me the vi'lets spring;
In vain to me, in glen or shaw,
The mavis and the lintwhite sing.
And maun I still, &c.

[1] Menie is an abbreviation of Marianne.

[2] This chorus is part of a song composed by a gentleman in Edinburgh, a particular friend of the author.

The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks,
But life to me's a weary dream,
A dream of ane that never wauks.
And maun I still, &c.

The wanton coot[1] the water skims,
Amang the reeds the ducklings cry,
The stately swan majestic swims,
And every thing is blest but I.
And maun I still, &c.

The sheep-herd steeks his faulding slap,[2]
And owre the moorland whistles shrill;
Wi' wild, unequal, wand'ring step
I meet him on the dewy hill.
And maun I still, &c.

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blythe waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and sings on flittering wings,
A woe-worn ghaist I hameward glide.
And maun I still, &c.

Come Winter with thine angry howl,
And raging bend the naked tree;
Thy gloom will soothe my cheerless soul,
When Nature all is sad like me!

And maun I still on Menie doat,
And bear the scorn that's in her e'e?
For it's jet, jet black, and it's like a hawk,
An' it winna let a body be.

[1] Water-fowl. [2] Shuts the gate of the fold.

HIGHLAND MARY.[1]

Ye banks, and braes, and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade,
I clasp'd her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' monie a vow, and lock'd embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But oh! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance,
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mould'ring now in silent dust,
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

[1] The foregoing song pleases myself; I think it is in my happiest manner. You will see at first glance that it suits the air. The subject of the song is one of the most interesting passages of my youthful days.

AULD LANG SYNE.[1]

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min' ?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days o' lang syne ?

CHORUS.

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne ?

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine ;
But we[1]ve wandered mony a weary foot
Sin auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

We twa hae paidl't[2] i' the burn,
From mornin sun till dine ;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

And here's a hand, my trusty fiere,[3]
And gie 's a hand o' thine ;
And we'll take a right guid Willie-waught,[4]
For auld lang syne.
For auld, &c,

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine ;
And we'll take a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

[1] An auld song which Burns improved. The two best verses after the chorus are his. [2] Dabbled. [3] Friend. [4] Draught.

FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT.

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that?
The coward slave we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure and a' that;
The rank is but the guinea stamp;
The man's the gow'd[1] for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-grey[2] and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that:
The honest man tho' e'er sae poor,
Is King o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie,[3] ca'd a lord,
Who struts and stares and a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof[4] for a' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
His riband star and a' that,
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith, he mauna fa'[5] that!
For a' that and a' that,
Their dignities and a' that,
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher ranks than a' that.

[1] Gold.
[2] Coarse woollen cloth. [3] Conceited fellow. [4] Blockhead. [5] Try

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a that;
That sense and worth o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree[1] and a' that;
For a' that and a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that;
That man to man, the warld o'er,
Shall brithers be for a' that.

TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

Tune—"The Hopeless Lover."

Now spring has clad the groves in green,
And strew'd the lea wi' flowers;
The furrow'd waving corn is seen
Rejoice in fostering showers;
While ilka thing in nature join
Their sorrows to forego,
O why thus all alone are mine
The weary steps of woe!

The trout within yon wimpling burn
Glides swift, a silver dart,
And safe beneath the shady thorn
Defies the angler's art:
My life was once that careless stream,
That wanton trout was I;
But love, wi' unrelenting beam,
Has scorch'd my fountain dry.

The little flow'ret's peaceful lot,
In yonder cliff that grows,
Which save the linnet's flight I wot,
Nae ruder visit knows,
Was mine: till love has o'er me past,
And blighted a' my bloom,
And now beneath the withering blast,
My youth and joy consume.

[1] May be conquerors.

The waken'd lav'rock warbling springs,
And climbs the early sky,
Winnowing blithe her dewy wings
In morning's rosy eye;
As little reckt I sorrow's power,
Until the flowery snare
O' witching love, in luckless hour,
Made me the thrall o' care.

O had my fate been Greenland snows,
Or Afric's burning zone,
Wi' man and nature leagu'd my foes,
So Peggy ne'er I'd known!
The wretch whase doom is, "Hope nae mair!
What tongue his woes can tell?
Within whose bosom, save despair,
Nae kinder spirits dwell.

A RED, RED ROSE.

Tune—"Wishaw's Favourite.

O, MY luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June:
O, my luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I:
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

O, WAT YE WHA'S IN YON TOWN?

Tune—"The Bonnie Lass in yon Town."

O, WAT ye wha's in yon town,
Ye see the e'enin sun upon?
The fairest dame's[1] in yon town,
That e'enin sun is shining on.

Now haply down yon gay green shaw,
She wanders by yon spreading tree;
How blest, ye flow'rs that round her blaw,
Ye catch the glances o' her e'e!

How blest, ye birds that round her sing,
And welcome in the blooming year;
And doubly welcome be the spring,
The season to my Lucy dear!

The sun blinks blithe on yon town,
And on yon bonnie braes of Ayr;
But my delight in yon town,
And dearest bliss, is Lucy fair.

Without my love, not a' the charms
O' Paradise could yield me joy;
But gie me Lucy in my arms,
And welcome Lapland's dreary sky.

My cave wad be a lover's bower,
Tho' raging winter rent the air;
And she a lovely little flower,
That I wad tent and shelter there.

[1] Mrs. Oswald, of Auchincruvie.

O, sweet is she in yon town,
Yon sinkin sun's gane down upon;
A fairer than's in yon town,
His setting beam ne'er shone upon.

If angry fate is sworn my foe,
And suffering I am doom'd to bear;
I careless quit aught else below,
But spare me, spare me Lucy dear.

For while life's dearest blood is warm,
Ae thought frae her shall ne'er depart,
And she—as fairest is her form,—
She has the truest, kindest heart.[1]

A VISION.

Tune—"Cumnock Psalms."

As I stood by yon roofless tower,[2]
Where the wa'-flower scents the dewy air,
Where the howlet mourns in her ivy bower,
And tells the midnight moon her care;

The winds were laid, the air was still,
The stars they shot alang the sky;
The fox was howling on the hill,
And the distant-echoing glens reply.

The stream, adown its haz'lly path,
Was rushing by the ruin'd wa',
Hasting to join the sweeping Nith,
Whase distant roarings swell and fa.

[1] These lines are as from the husband to his wife.
[2] The tower belonged to the ruins of Lincluden Abbey, near Dumfries, often visited by Burns.

The cauld blue north was streaming forth
Her lights wi' hissing, eerie din;
Athort the lift they start and shift,
Like fortune's favours, tint as win.

By heedless chance I turn'd mine eyes,
And by the moonbeam, shook to see
A stern and stalwart ghaist arise,
Attir'd as minstrels wont to be.

Had I a statue been o' stane,
His darin look had daunted me;
And on his bonnet grav'd was plain
The sacred posy—Libertie!

And frae his harp sic strains did flow,
Might rouse the slumbering dead to hear;
But oh, it was a tale of woe,
As ever met a Briton's ear!

He sang wi' joy his former day,
He weeping wail'd his latter times;
But what he said it was nae play;
I winna venture't in my rhymes.

O WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST.

O, WERT thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea;
My plaidie to the angry airt,[1]
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee.
Or did misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a' to share it a'.

[1] Quarter of the sky.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Of earth and air, of earth and air,
The desert were a paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there.
Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The only jewel in my crown,
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

THE HIGHLAND LASSIE.[1]

Tune—"The deuks dang o'er my daddy!"

NAE gentle dames, tho' e'er sae fair,
Shall ever be my Muse's care;
Their titles a' are empty show;
Gie me my Highland lassie, O.

CHORUS.

Within the glen sae bushy, O,
Aboon the plain sae rushy, O,
I set me down wi' right good will,
To sing my Highland lassie, O.

Oh, were yon hills and valleys mine,
Yon palace and yon gardens fine!
The world then the love should know
I bear my Highland lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

[1] "My Highland Lassie," observes Burns, "was a warm-hearted, charming young creature, as ever blest a man with generous love. After a pretty long tract of the most ardent reciprocal attachment, we met by appointment, on the second Sunday of May in a sequestered spot by the banks of the Ayr, where we spent the day in taking a farewell, before she should embark for the West Highlands, to arrange matters among her friends for our projected change of life. At the close of autumn she crossed the sea to meet me at Greenock, where she had scarce landed when she was seized with a malignant fever, which hurried my dear girl to the grave, before I could even hear of her illness."

The noble and pathetic ode "To Mary in Heaven" page 19 was addressed to her.

But fickle fortune frowns on me,
And I maun cross the raging sea;
But while my crimson currents flow
I'll love my Highland lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

Altho' thro' foreign climes I range
I know her heart will never change,
For her bosom burns with honour's glow.
My faithful Highland lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c,

For her I'll dare the distant shore,
For her I'll dare the billows' roar,
That Indian wealth may lustre throw
Around my Highland lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

She has my heart, she has my hand,
By sacred truth and honour's band!
Till the mortal stroke shall lay me low,
I'm thine my Highland lassie, O.

Fareweel the glen sae bushy, O!
Fareweel the plain sae rushy, O!
To other lands I now must go,
To sing my Highland lassie, O!

PEGGY'S CHARMS.[1]

My Peggy's face, my Peggy's form,
The frost of hermit age might warm;
My Peggy's worth, my Peggy's mind,
Might charm the first of human kind.
I love my Peggy's angel air,
Her face so truly heavenly fair,

[1] Miss Margaret Chalmers.

Her native grace so void of art;
But I adore my Peggy's heart.
The lily's hue, the rose's dye,
The kindling lustre of an eye;
Who but owns their magic sway,
Who but knows they all decay!
The tender thrill, the pitying tear,
The generous purpose, nobly dear,
The gentle look that rage disarms,—
These are all immortal charms.

A PRAYER FOR MARY.[1]

Tune—"Blue Bonnets."

POWERS celestial, whose protection
Ever guards the virtuous fair,
While in distant climes I wander,
Let my Mary be your care:
Let her form sae fair and faultless,
Fair and faultless as your own,—
Let my Mary's kindred spirit
Draw your choicest influence down.

Make the gales you waft around her
Soft and peaceful as her breast;
Breathing in the breeze that fans her,
Soothe her bosom into rest;
Guardian angels, O protect her,
When in distant lands I roam;
To realms unknown while fate exiles me,
Make her bosom still my home.

[1] Probably Highland Mary.

YOUNG PEGGY.[1]

Tune—"Last time I cam o'er the muir."

YOUNG Peggie blooms our bonniest lass,
Her blush is like the morning
The rosy dawn the springing grass,
With early gems adorning:
Her eyes outshine the radiant beams
That gild the passing shower,
And glitter o'er the crystal streams,
And cheer each fresh'ning flower.

Her lips more than the cherries bright,
A richer dye has grac'd them,
They charm th' admiring gazer's sight,
And sweetly tempt to taste them:
Her smile is as the ev'ning mild,
When feather'd pairs are courting,
And little lambkins, wanton wild,
In playful bands disporting.

Were Fortune lovely Peggy's foe,
Such sweetness would relent her,
As blooming spring unbends the brow
Of surly savage Winter.
Detraction's eye no aim can gain
Her winning powers to lessen;
And fretful envy grins in vain,
The poison'd tooth to fasten.

Ye Pow'rs of Honour, Love, and Truth,
From ev'ry ill defend her:
Inspire the highly favour'd youth
The destinies intend her;
Still fan the sweet connubial flame
Responsive in each bosom;
And bless the dear parental name
With many a filial blossom.

[1] This was one of the poet's earliest compositions.—*Cromek.*

MARY MORISON.

Tune—"Bide ye yet."

O MARY at thy window be,
It is the wish'd, the trysted hour!
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor;
How blythely wad I bide the stoure,[1]
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard nor saw:
Tho' this was fair and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sigh'd and said amang them a',
"Ye are na Mary Morison."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only faut is loving thee?
If love for love thou wilt nae gie,
At least be pity to me shown!
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

[1] Dust.

THE SODGER'S RETURN.

Air—"The mill, mill, O."

WHEN wild war's deadly blast was blawn,
And gentle peace returning,
Wi' mony a sweet babe fatherless,
And mony a widow mourning:
I left the lines and tented field,
Where lang I'd been a lodger,
My humble knapsack a' my wealth,
A poor and honest sodger.

A leal, light heart was in my breast,
My hand unstained wi' plunder;
And for fair Scotia, hame again,
I cheery on did wander.
I thought upon the banks o' Coil,
I thought upon my Nancy,
I thought upon the witching smile
That caught my youthful fancy.

At length I reach'd the bonny glen,
Where early life I sported;
I passed the mill and trysting thorn,
Where Nancy aft I courted:
Wha spied I but my ain dear maid,
Down by her mother's dwelling!
And turn'd me round to hide the flood
That in my een was swelling.

Wi' alter'd voice, quoth I, "Sweet lass,
Sweet as yon hawthorn blossom,
O! happy, happy may he be,
That's dearest to thy bosom!
My purse is light, I've far to gang,
And fain wad be thy lodger;
I've served my King and country lang—
Take pity on a sodger!"

Sae wistfully she gaz'd on me,
And lovelier was than ever:
Quo' she, "A sodger ance I lo'ed,
Forget him shall I never:
Our humble cot, and hamely fare,
Ye freely shall partake it.
That gallant badge, the dear cockade,
Ye're welcome for the sake o't."

She gaz'd,—she redden'd like a rose—
Syne[1] pale like onie lily;
She sank within my arms and cried,
"Art thou my ain, dear Willie?"
"By Him who made yon sun and sky,
By whom true love's regarded,
I am the man; and thus may still
True lovers be rewarded!

"The wars are o'er and I'm come hame
And find thee still true-hearted,
Tho' poor in gear, we're rich in love,
And mair we'se ne'er be parted."
Quo' she, "my grandsire left me gowd,
A mailen[2] plenish'd fairly;
And come, my faithful sodger lad,
Thou'rt welcome to it dearly!"

For gold the merchant ploughs the main
The farmer ploughs the manor;
But glory is the sodger's prize;
The sodger's wealth is honour:
The brave, poor sodger ne'er despise,
Nor count him as a stranger,
Remember he's his country's stay
In day and hour o' danger.

[1] Then. [2] Farm

THE CHEVALIER'S LAMENT.[1]

Tune—"Captain O'Kean."

THE small birds rejoice in the green leaves returning,
The murmuring streamlet winds clear thro' the vale;
The hawthorn trees blow in the dews of the morning,
And wild scatter'd cowslips bedeck the green dale:

But what can give pleasure, or what can seem fair,
While the lingering moments are numbered by care?
No flowers gaily springing, nor birds sweetly singing,
Can soothe the sad bosom of joyless despair.

The deed that I dar'd could it merit their malice,
A King or a Father, to place on his throne?
His right are these hills, and his right are these valleys,
Where the wild beasts find shelter, but I can find none.

But 'tis not my sufferings thus wretched forlorn;
My brave gallant friends, 'tis your ruin I mourn:
Your deeds prov'd so loyal in hot bloody trial,
Alas! can I make you no sweeter return?

IT IS NA, JEAN, THY BONNIE FACE.

Tune—"The maid's complaint."

IT is na, Jean, thy bonnie face
Nor shape that I admire,
Although thy beauty and thy grace
Might weel awake desire.
Something in ilka part o' thee
To praise, to love, I find;
But dear as is thy form to me,
Still dearer is thy mind.

[1] Supposed to be spoken by the young Prince Charles Edward, when wandering in the Highlands of Scotland, after his fatal defeat at Culloden.—*Thomson.*

Nae mair ungen'rous wish I hae,
Nor stronger in my breast,
Than if I canna mak thee sae,
At least to see thee blest.
Content am I, if Heaven shall give
But happiness to thee:
And as wi' thee I'd wish to live,
For thee I'd bear to die.

THE BANKS OF THE DEVON.[1]

Tune—"Bhannerach dhon na chri."

How pleasant the banks of the clear-winding Devon,
With green-spreading bushes and flowers blooming fair!
But the bonniest flower on the banks of the Devon
Was once a sweet bud on the braes of the Ayr.
Mild be the sun on this sweet blushing flower,
In the gay, rosy morn, as it bathes in the dew!
And gentle the fall of the soft vernal shower,
That steals on the evening each leaf to renew.

O spare the dear blossoms, ye orient breezes,
With chill, hoary wing, as ye usher the dawn!
And far be thou distant, thou reptile that seizes
The verdure and pride of the garden and lawn!
Let Bourbon exult in his gay, gilded lilies,
And England triumphant, display her proud rose:
A fairer than either adorns the green valleys
Where Devon, sweet Devon, meandering flows.

[1] This song was composed on Charlotte Hamilton, a beautiful girl, the sister of the Poet's friend, Gavin Hamilton.

SHELAH O'NEIL.

WHEN first I began for to sigh and to woo her,
Of many fine things I did say a great deal,
But, above all the rest, that which pleased her the best,
Was, oh! will you marry me, Shelah O'Neil?
My point I soon carried, for straight we were married,
Then the weight of my burden I soon 'gan to feel,—
For she scolded, she fisted—O then I enlisted,
Left Ireland and whiskey, and Shelah O'Neil.

Then tired and dull-hearted, O then I deserted,
And fled into regions far distant from home,
To Frederick's army, where none e'er could harm me,
Save Shelah herself in the shape of a bomb.
I fought every battle, where cannons did rattle,
Felt sharp shot, alas! and the sharp-pointed steel;
But in all my wars round, thank my stars, I ne'er found
Ought so sharp as the tongue of my Shelah O'Neil.

O TIBBIE, I HA'E SEEN THE DAY.[1]

[Composed at Seventeen years of age.]

Tune—"Invercauld's Reel."

CHORUS.

O TIBBIE! I ha'e seen the day
Ye wad na been sae shy;
For lack o' gear ye lightly me,
But trowth, I care na by.

[1] "Tibbie" was the daughter of a portioner of Kyle—*i.e.* the proprietor of three acres of peat-moss—who thought herself rich enough to treat a ploughman with contempt.

Yestreen I met you on the moor,
Ye spak' na, but gaed by like stoure.[1]
Ye geck at me because I'm poor,
But fient a hair care I.

I doubt na, lass, but ye may think,
Because ye ha'e the name o' clink,
That ye can please me at a wink,
Whene'er ye like to try.

But sorrow tak him that's sae mean,
Although his pouch o' coin were clean,
Wha follows such a saucy quean
That looks sae proud and high.

Although a lad were e'er sae smart,
If that he want the yellow dirt,
Ye'll cast your head anither airt,
And answer him fu' dry.

But if he ha'e the name o' gear,
Ye'll fasten to him like a brier,
Though hardly he, for sense or lear,
Be better than the kye.

But, Tibbie, lass, tak' my advice:
Your daddie's gear mak's you sae nice;
The de'il a ane wad spier your price,
Were ye as poor as I.

There lives a lass in yonder park,
I would nae g'ie her in her sark
For thee, wi' a' thy thousan' mark!
Ye need nae look sae high.

[1] Dust.

ON CESSNOCK BANKS.

[Improved Version.]

Tune—"If he be a butcher neat and trim."

On Cessnock banks a lassie dwells;
Could I describe her shape and mien
Our lasses a' she far excels,—
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

She's sweeter than the morning dawn,
When rising Phœbus first is seen,
And dewdrops twinkle o'er the lawn;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

She's stately like yon youthful ash,
That grows the cowslip braes between,
And drinks the stream with vigor fresh;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

She's spotless like the flowering thorn,
With flowers so white and leaves so green,
When purest in the dewy morn;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her looks are like the vernal May,
When evening Phœbus shines serene,
While birds rejoice on every spray;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her hair is like the curling mist
That climbs the mountain-sides at e'en,
When flower-reviving rains are past;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her forehead 's like the showery bow,
When gleaming sunbeams intervene,
And gild the distant mountain's brow;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her cheeks are like yon crimson gem,
The pride of all the flowery scene,
Just opening on its thorny stem;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her teeth are like the nightly snow,
When pale the morning rises keen,
While hid the murm'ring streamlets flow;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her lips are like yon cherries ripe,
That sunny walls from Boreas screen;
They tempt the taste and charm the sight;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her breath is like the fragrant breeze,
That gently stirs the blossomed bean,
When Phœbus sinks behind the seas;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her voice is like the evening thrush,
That sings on Cessnock banks unseen,
While his mate sits nestling in the bush:
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

But its nae her air, her form, her face,
Though matching Beauty's fabled queen,
'Tis the mind that shines in every grace,
And chiefly in her roguish een.

UP IN THE MORNING EARLY.

CHORUS.

Up in the morning's no for me,
Up in the morning early;
When a' the hills are covered wi' snaw,
I'm sure it's winter fairly.

Cauld blaws the wind frae east to west,
The drift is driving sairly;
Sae loud and shrill I hear the blast,
I'm sure its winter fairly.

The birds sit chittering in the thorn,
A' day they fare but sparely;
And lang's the night frae e'en to morn,
I'm sure it 's winter fairly.
Up in the morning's no for me,
Up in the morning early;
When a' the hills are covered wi' snaw,
I'm sure its winter fairly.

THE CAPTAIN'S LADY.

Tune—"O, mount and go."

CHORUS.

O, MOUNT and go,
Mount and make you ready;
O, mount and go,
And be the Captain's lady.

When the drums do beat,
And the cannons rattle,
Thou shalt sit in state,
And see thy love in battle.

When the vanquished foe
Sues for peace and quiet,
To the shades we'll go,
And in love enjoy it.
O, mount and go,
Mount and make you ready;
O, mount and go,
And be the Captain's lady.

JOHNNY PEEP.

Burns was one day at a cattle market, in a town in Cumberland, and lost sight of some of the friends who accompanied him. He entered a tavern, opened the door of a room, and looked in, where three Cumberland men were enjoying themselves. As he withdrew one of them shouted, "Come in, Johnny Peep." Burns obeyed, seated himself at the table, and soon was the life and soul of the party. It was proposed that each should write a stanza of verse, and put it, with half-a-crown, below the candlestick, with this stipulation, that the best poet was to have his half-crown returned, while the other three were to be expended to treat the party. When that of Burns was read, amid much laughter he was declared to have won the prize.

HERE am I, Johnny Peep:
I saw three sheep,
  And these three sheep saw me;
Half-a-crown a-piece
Will pay for their fleece,
  And so Johnny Peep gets free.

OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW.

Tune—"Miss Admiral Gordon's Strathspey."

OF a' the airts the wind can blaw,
  I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
  The lassie I lo'e best:
There wild woods grow, and rivers row
  And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
  Is ever wi' my Jean.[1]

I see her in the dewy flowers,
  I see her sweet and fair;
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
  I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
  By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings,
  But minds me o' my Jean.

[1] Jean Armour.

Upon the banks o' flowing Clyde
The lasses busk them braw;
But when their best they ha'e put on,
My Jeannie dings them a':
In hamely weeds she far exceeds
The fairest o' the town;
Baith sage and gay confess it sae,
Though dressed in russet gown.

The gamesome lamb, that sucks its dam,
Mair harmless canna be;
She has nae faut (if sic ye ca't),
Except her love for me.
The sparkling dew, o' clearest hue,
Is like her shining een;
In shape and air nane can compare
Wi' my sweet, lovely Jean.

O, blaw ye westlin winds, blaw saft
Amang the leafy trees,
Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
Bring hame the laden bees;
And bring the lassie back to me
That's aye sae neat and clean;
Ae smile o' her wad banish care,
Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows amang the knowes
Hae passed atween us twa!
How fond to meet, how wae to part,
That night she gaed awa!
The Powers aboon can only ken,
To whom the heart is seen,
That nane can be sae dear to me
As my sweet, lovely Jean!

MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING.

SHE is a winsome wee thing
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet, wee wife o' mine.

I never saw a fairer,
I never lo'ed a dearer,
And niest my heart I'll wear her
For fear my jewel tine.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet, wee wife o' mine.

The warl's wrack we share o't,
The warstle and the care o't:
Wi' her I'll blithely bear it,
And think my lot divine.

O PHILLY!

Tune—"The sow's tail."

HE.

O PHILLY! happy be that day,
When, roving through the gathered hay,
My youthfu' heart was stown away,
And by thy charms, my Philly!

SHE.

O Willy! aye I bless the grove
Where first I owned my maiden love,
Whilst thou didst pledge the Powers above
To be my ain dear Willy.

HE.

As songsters of the early year
Are ilka day mair sweet to hear,
So ilka day to me mair dear
And charming is my Philly.

SHE.

As on the briar the budding rose
Still richer breathes and fairer blows,
So in my tender bosom grows
The love I bear my Willy.

HE.

The milder sun and bluer sky,
That crown my harvest cares wi' joy,
Were ne'er sae welcome to my eye
As is a sight o' Philly.

SHE.

The little swallow's wanton wing,
Though wafting o'er the flowery spring,
Did ne'er to me sic tidings bring,
As meeting o' my Willy.

HE.

The bee that through the sunny hour
Sips nectar in the opening flower,
Compared wi' my delight is poor,
Upon the lips o' Philly.

SHE.

The woodbine in the dewy weet,
When evening shades in silence meet,
Is nocht sae fragrant or sae sweet
As is a kiss o' Willy.

HE.

Let Fortune's wheel at random rin,
And fools may tine, and knaves may win;
My thoughts are a' bound up in ane,
And that's my ain dear Philly.

SHE.

What's a' the joys that gowd can gi'e!
I care nae wealth a single flie;
The lad I love's the lad for me.
And that's my ain dear Willy.

DAINTY DAVIE.[1]

Now rosy May comes in wi' flowers,
To deck her gay green spreading bowers;
And now comes in my happy hours,
To wander wi' my Davie.

CHORUS.

Meet me on the warlock knowe,[2]
Dainty Davie, dainty Davie;
There I'll spend the day wi' you,
My ain, dear dainty Davie.

The crystal waters round us fa',
The merry birds are lovers a',
The scented breezes round us blaw,
A wandering wi' my Davie.
Meet me, &c.

When purple morning starts the hare,
To steal upon her early fare,
Then through the dews I will repair,
To meet my faithfu' Davie.
Meet me, &c.

When day, expiring in the west,
The curtain draws o' Nature's rest,
I flee to his arms I lo'e best,
And that's my ain dear Davie.

Meet me in the warlock knowe,
Bonnie Davie, dainty Davie;
There I'll spend the day wi' you,
My ain dear, dainty Davie.

[1] "Daintie Davie" is the title of an old Scotch song, from which Burns has taken nothing but the title and the measure.—CURRIE.
[2] The wizard's hill.

FULL WELL THOU KNOW'ST.[1]

Tune—"Rothiemurche's Rant."

CHORUS.

FAIREST maid on Devon banks,
Crystal Devon, winding Devon,
Wilt thou lay that frown aside,
And smile as thou were wont to do?

FULL well thou know'st I love thee dear,
Couldst thou to malice lend an ear?
O, did not Love exclaim, "Forbear,
Nor use a faithful lover so?
Fairest maid, &c.

Then come, thou fairest of the fair,
Those wonted smiles, O, let me share;
And by thy beauteous self I swear,
No love but thine my heart shall know.
Fairest maid, &c.

[1] Supposed to be the last song written by Burns. "I tried my hand on 'Rothiemurche' this morning. The measure is so difficult, that it is impossible to infuse much genius into the lines."—R.B.

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